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AN

ESSAY ON IRELAND,

(PURELY LITERARY)

BY

MARTIN A. O'BRENNAN, L.L.D.,

AUTHOR OF

"ANCIENT IRELAND," AND PRINCIPAL OF THE COLLEGIATE SEMINARY,
57 BOLTON-STREET;

BEING

TWO EXTEMPORE LECTURES,

DELIVERED IN THE THEATRE OF

THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE, DUBLIN,

MAY, 1856,

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE

"IRISH SPEAKING SOCIETY."

CONTENTS.

The Early Enlightenment of Ireland—Her Possession of Letters 950 years before Christ—200 before the building of Rome—Her high Antiquity and Renown—Her progress in Arts, Sciences, and Arms—Her Commerce before England was known to the Romans—Ollamb Fodhla (Ollav Fyola)—Tara and its Parliament, 922 years A.C.—The Standing Army of the Milesians—Their Generals, Mac Mhorna, Cumhall, Fionn Mac Chumhaill, Goll or Aodh (Ee).

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JAMES DUFFY, 7, WELLINGTON-QUAY.

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ANCIENT IRELAND AND SAINT PATRICK.

(SECOND EDITION.)

See author's address, and the reviewers of the work, at page 49.

There were amongst the subscribers to the first edition—

His Grace, the Lord Archbishop of Armagh,
His Grace, the Lord Archbishop of Dublin, Delegate Apostolic,
His Grace, the Lord Archbishop of Tuam,
His Grace, the Lord Archbishop of Melhourne,
The Most Rev. the Lord Bishop of Meath,
• The Most Rev. the Lord Bishop of Dromore,
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The Most Noble the Marquis of Kildare,
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The Right Hon. Judge Ball,
The Right Hon. Judge Keogh, besides

The Very Rev. Doctor Newman, C.U.; the Very Rev. Doctor O'Renehan, Maynooth; Very Rev. Archdeacon Hamilton; Very Rev. John Spratt, D.D.; Very Rev. Dean Meyler; the heads of all the Catholic Colleges, almost all the other dignitaries of Ireland; 20 M.P.'s, 20 D.L.'s; 50 J.P.'s; together with 315 P.P.'s; 280 C.C.'s; 220 lay Irish gentlemen, and a great many Englishmen and Scotch.

NOTICE.

The following Essay is the substance of two extemporaneous Lectures, written from memory, fully a month after the delivery of them, and at the urgent request of influential parties. There is, therefore, much of the pathos and vigour of the spoken lectures lost to the reader. However, with all its defects, it may be found interesting, and a defence of Ireland's early enlightenment. This was the author's sole object in delivering and printing the Lectures. He is sanguine that the public will appreciate his motive by encouraging the circulation.

EXORDIUM.

MY FRIENDS,—

If ever I was at a loss for words to convey a notion adequate to the sense of a sincere and deep-felt gratitude for a generous and warm public recognition, I am in that position this moment. Were I not impressed with a lively emotion on being thus complimented by so large, so intellectual, so select an assembly as that which I have the high privilege of addressing, comprising parties of different political views and different religious opinions, clergymen of various persuasions, I should be deemed devoid of the common feelings of man. He is not man who places not a due appreciation on applause; though to be an effective public character one must rise above the influence of popular applause and censure, and firmly pursue the path he has marked out for himself. However, a person must be raised by qualifications high above the level of mankind in general, to be unawed by censure, or unmoved by applause. But as I have, or can have no pretensions to such eminent qualities, I beg, in the best language I can command, to return you my warmest acknowledgement for this night's enthusiastic reception. Before I enter on the immediate subject of my lecture, allow me to offer an observation in reference to a discourse I made lately in this hall. On the occasion of the first meeting of the National Irish Speaking Society, I took occasion to animadvert on the great facility of acquiring a knowledge of the Irish language, mainly owing to the few, and these few—defined sounds of the alphabet, I may say phonographic—at the same time I gave a rapid review of the monstrosities and difficulties which the English language presents, rendering it next to an impossibility for a foreigner to learn it. It will be in your recollection that my remarks at the time were necessarily hurried, that I had not time to explain myself fully, nor should it be expected, as I was not giving a lecture on the subject, but making a passing allusion. I since learned that a few ladies

and gentlemen felt rather displeased that I should have attempted to depreciate the English language. Now, I have to say, that such was not my intention. nor would I, on any account, offer an intentional offence to the religious or national prejudice of any lady or gentleman who honours me with his or her presence, with the express condition that the lecture would be purely literary. No lecturer should abuse his position by offering any remarks capable of wounding the feelings of any one of his audience. The waters of knowledge and literature should be allowed to flow freely over the minds of men without any attempt to muddy them or poison their refreshing influence. I assure you that if what I stated on that night appeared distasteful, I am no more to blame than a physician, who administers an unpalatable draught, or a surgeon who causes pain, whilst he amputates a diseased member. Each acts not to hurt, but to cure. It is exactly so with a lecturer; he is bound to speak the truth, not to offend, but to instruct, applying language without acerbity, and in as suave and attractive a manner as to render his lecture agreeable and of value. I shall, moreover, give my philological reason for the few remarks then made by me, when I added that Mr. Ellis, A.B., an Englishman of the present day, would bear me out in my statement. I would, however, not have you understand me as intending to make an impression on your minds that the English language is a vulgar or bad one. Such an endeavour would be the act of a prejudiced and an unlearned man, because it must be, of necessity, a very rich and graceful dialect, as it has been, from time to time, formed of and by the gradual accession of rich rivulets from original and vigorous tongues, such as German, Hiberno-Celtic or Irish, Normando-Celtic or French, Britanno-Celtic, Greek, Latin, Hebrew, &c. Hence you see how ridiculous would have been the assertion that it is a poor language. In fact, it has been a great reservoir—a Mississippi, if I would be allowed the use of the term—into which many beautiful tributaries have emptied their moral waters. Yet I am bound to state, that if the accumulated loans were taken away, the language of England might well have applied to it the fable of the crow in borrowed plumage. For, after all, the Saxon tongue, which is the skeleton tongue of the English, though vigorous and an original dialect, is nevertheless harsh, and wants copiousness and expressiveness.

COMPARISON OF IRISH AND ENGLISH SOUNDS.

I have been looking in my library this day, and met with a work of Mr. Ellis, a Fellow of Cambridge, author of "The Alphabet of Nature;" but before I was fortunate enough to light upon it, I had myself, from observation, arranged a few facts relative to the difficulty of learning the English when compared with the rare attainment of a knowledge of the Irish. Let me begin with the letter *a*, which has the sound of *y* in "manage," pronounced "*manyidge*;" ale, *ayle*; all, *awl*; fatal, *fatul*; pat, *pat*; what, *whot*; many, *meni*; image, *imidge*. Hence *a* has eight sounds, whereas in Irish it has only one, like *a* in cat. It is true it sometimes sounds as *a* in what, and *a* in *all*, but in these instances the variation is the result of circumstances. In the former case it arises from that letter being followed by a double consonant, as balla, *bolla*, a wall; and in the latter it must have the accute accent (*â*) over it to be pronounced *aw*.* It is, therefore, clear that *a* has but one natural sound, as *an*, *the*, whilst *ann*, the preposition *in*, sounds *onn*. *E* has several sounds; thus, *e* in England†—*Inglund*; pretty—*prüti*; complete—*complit*; her—*hur*; me—*mee*; reluctant, *relucent*; rely—*rëlly*; clerck—*clark*. From this you see that *e* has six sounds, besides others that I may not recollect. In Irish it has but one natural sound, as *e* in *yet*; when it sounds *ay*, or as *a* in *ale*, the accute accent must be applied. *I* in English has sounds, *i*, *u*, *e*, *ee*, *y*, as hit, bird—*burd*; birth, *berth*; virtue, *vertu*; Camphire, *Kamfer*; chagreen, *shagreen*; wine, *wyne*. In Irish there is only sound, as *i* in *bü*, the accute must be used to give it the sound of *ee*. *O* has many sounds in English, as heard in roist, rot, vote, lose, prove, onion, pronounced rawist, *rot*, *vôte*, looze, proove, runyun, besides food, moon, *fûde*, *mûne*, and door, *dôre*; also blood, flood, &c., *blüd*, *flüd*, &c. In Irish the one natural sound is like short *ü* in the word *hut*; thus *Coll*, the second letter of the Irish alphabet, pronounced *kull*, the accute accent being required to give it a long sound, as *ô* in vote. The same is to be said with respect to *u*. I am free to confess that the sound of *o*, in some trifling manner, invades

* A short vowel assumes a long sound before an aspirated consonant, as *right*—*ree*.

† This line means "pronounced."

that of *u*; but to the keen ear a nice difference will occur, as in the word *ucht*, *ught*. This remark is in reference only to short *ŭ*. In these observations I have not alluded, as you plainly see, to the variations in the English letters, because of circumstances, or of their being mute. If I did, your surprise would be increased. I trust, as the subject may be interesting to many of the audience, I may be allowed to point out a few other strange sounds in the English: eight—*ayte*, and *aygth*; busy, bury—*bizze*, *berry*, quest—*qwest*; air, ere, e'er, eyre, heir, ayre (the old third person) Ayre (a shire) all of these are sounded *ayre*. In all English dissyllables *y—ee*, as beauty, heavy, *beuttee*, *hevee*, *y i* in spy, fly*—*spt*, *flt*; ieu in lieutenant—*levtennant*; au—aw, as in *because*; gh silent, as in right, wright, tight, weight, *rile*, *tite*, *wayte*. You will please observe the variation of sound and the many mutes, without any phonographic mark. There is no such monstrosity in our sweet native tongue; as well consonant as vowel, each letter having its own absolute sound, there being no variation without a phonograph or phonotype. Again, observe *feat*, *feet*—*fete*, *fate*—*feet*; also *beat*, *beet*, *heat*—*beet*, *heet*; *read*—*red*, or *reed*; *lead*, *led*, or *leed*; *bread*, *dead*—*bred*, *ded*; *been*—*bin*; *hast* should be *havest*, and all the other irregularities of that verb, as well as of *am*, *art*, *is*, *was*, *been*, *he*, *are*, &c. I refer you to the difficult rules on orthography by Davis, whence you will learn that the English orthography will hardly ever be brought to a standard. Nor are you to imagine that your present system of spelling is that of the English 100 years ago. You could scarcely read it, so different is it from the present; you would not suppose it to be the same language. The same cannot be said of our vernacular, as by a close attention to the manuscript of the ancient and modern Celtic scholars can be easily observed. I have used the word scholar, because it is not every man who speaks flipantly, or affects to write Irish, is a scholar. Its native beauty, grace, and vigour were much injured by ignorant copyists. They copied according to their own auricular appreciation of sounds, not agreeably to strict philosophy. There is the same difference between the philosophical grammarian and the mere auricular writer, as between a scientific, artistic musician, and him who plays by ear. The ladies can fully understand this view of the case. I may here add, that Greek and Latin ex-

This line means "pronounced."

perienced some changes with the times, and for the worse. Indeed, it must be confessed that the primitive languages, having had a divine origin, were rather disfigured than improved by every innovation. As God made man perfect, so did He his language; and though new objects have been periodically appearing, which required new names, it was only necessary to apply compounds or abstracts of the old terms to create new signs.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, lest you might infer that, besides my own experience, I was not supported in my statements, I shall place before you a few short extracts from foreign philologists of the present day. Dr. K. M. Rapp says: "It (the English tongue) is obscured by a whimsically antiquated orthography."

Professor Wheedom of America, writes of it—"A large mess of stupifying barbarisms; it is vague, false, capricious, contradictory, confusing, stultifying, demoralizing—an execrable nuisance, as it is now taught." Thomas Sheridan observes—"Refinement of language is a necessary to politeness," an exactness in which (the English language) is found to be unattainable not only by foreigners, but provincials. I find this curious English orthography, *choule=djoul*; *chough=tshuf*, a sea bird; can anything be more *monstrous*? I need not tell you, what all the learned confess, that the Irish is a regulated and polished language, and hence the humblest Irish peasant, like the *paisant* of France, is one of the most polite of the human race. Tourists declare that such is the result of their experience throughout the rural parts of Ireland. Mr. Pitman is no less severe on his own English tongue than the previous authorities. Mr. Ellis, of Cambridge College, remarks—"1st. It takes seven years for a child to learn to read (English) with tolerable accuracy. 2nd. It takes many years before he is able to spell. 3rd. No one ever knows, with certainty, how to pronounce a word, which he has only seen, and never heard. 4th. No one ever knows, with certainty, how to spell a word which he has only heard, and has not yet seen written. 5th. Very few can, or do, at all times, spell every word with which they are familiar, both in speaking and writing correctly. 6th. Foreigners are continually committing the most ludicrous mistakes of pronunciation, being misled by the spelling. 7. The irregularities of spelling are the great cause of the difficulty experienced in learning our (English) language." Now, to obviate this diffi-

culty, he recommends phonography and phonctypy; in other words, that to certain letters should be applied marks for the purpose of showing their true sound. This system is exactly what has been adopted in writing and printing Irish. I have taught Englishmen in twelve lessons to read and write our language;* and I am bold to say that any youth of ordinary capacity, by devoting as much care to Irish as he would to English, would learn it in three months, so as to read and speak it with ease. Mr. Ellis, in his learned work, enumerates thousands of the barbarisms of his native tongue, thus—"ear, earth, pear, heart=†(according to him) *ir, urth, payr, hart; hoe, shoe=ho, shu; now, know, knowledge=nou, no, nulidj; ague, plague=agy, plag; to, too, two=tü; through, threw=thrü; trough=troff; enough=enow and enuff; lough=lok; laugh=laff; cough=koff; strait, straight=strayt; guessed, guest=gest; psalm, calm=sām, kām.*" He concludes with the angry remark—"none but itself (English) can be its parallel; we sincerely hope that 'we ne'er shall look upon its like again.'" We are not to wonder that the first English settlers in this country threw away the use of such a dialect, and adopted the Phonographic Celtic, easy of acquisition, and melodious of sound. From the authorities I have quoted—none of them Irish—you will have observed that I was not at all severe in my remarks regarding the English language. *They* call it barbarous; *I* did not. If strict regularity in writing a language, and a scrupulous care to adopt certain marks to make it mellifluous and polished, be the characteristic of a polished people—and Messrs. Ellis, Pitman, Sheridan, Dr. Franklin, Professor Wheedom, and a host of others, state that such is the case—our Milesian ancestors must have been the most polished nation of antiquity, their language being what the writers alluded to require. I trust I have satisfied the ladies and gentlemen that it was not I, but English writers, who depreciated the English dialect (loud and continued applause). I have to offer you an apology, especially to the gentlemen of the committee, for the digression from the programme of the lecture.

* That is, I gave them such a knowledge of it as enabled them to pursue the study; no man is such an adept as to know all the words of any language.

† Means "pronounce."

THE EARLY ENLIGHTENMENT AND GREAT ANTIQUITY OF IRELAND.

However, as I have already transgressed, I must ask a further indulgence by reversing the order of the lecture, and now place before this enlightened audience some undoubted proofs of the early possession of letters by our Pagan ancestors, and of Ireland's enlightenment fully 900 years before Christ, 1800 years before the time of St. Patrick.* I am obliged to adopt this course, because I have sometimes read assertions of parties, as well of those who have a little knowledge of languages, as of those who have not, except of English, to the effect that it was Saint Patrick introduced the alphabet into Ireland. Such a wild statement makes an Irish scholar laugh, and pity the man who is capable of uttering such nonsense. You—most of whom understand this subject as well as I do—are aware that the Milesians claim descent from Gadelas, son of Niul, son of Phenius Fearsa. You are aware that Phenius, from whom Phœnicia was so called, founded the University of Shenaar, wherein were taught under his own rectorship, and the superintendence of his cousin, Gadelas, from Achaia in Greece, all the dialects which were then spoken. It was the latter Greek professor who digested into scholastic shape the Celtic tongue, and hence the great affinity in letters, marks, and melody between the Greek and Irish. It was after this Gadelas that Niul's young son, the prince Gadelas, got his name, such was the veneration that king Fearsa's son had for his tutor. When the king of Scythia had found Niul an adept in all the known languages, he returned from near Babylon to his own kingdom—east of the Caspian Sea, and beyond the river Jaxertes, the present Independent Tartary—having brought with him scholars to establish schools in his own territories. He then resumed the reins of government, which he had entrusted to his son Nenua for more than twenty years, whilst he was president of the first University of which history has any record. Niul was invited to Egypt for the purpose of introducing letters, and consequent enlightenment, into that country. Pharoah gave him his daughter in marriage, and a

* After the delivery of this lecture, I read a work from the pen of Doctor Parsons of London, (1753,) which makes Ireland the seat of letters centuries before the date given above.

large country along the Red Sea: this land, in scripture language, is called Caperchiroth. Other professors, as young swarms of bees from hives, issued forth to all parts westward, bearing with them the lamp of learning, and the seeds of civilization, illumining all places, scattering the knowledge of languages, and introducing erudition into every nation wherein they sojourned. They taught the Egyptians the use of light-houses, or pharos, which answered the twofold purpose of *sun-worshipping*, and as guides for mariners, pointing out to them the safe entrance into their harbours. These were also used for the same purpose as our martello towers, to guard the ports and to watch the approach of an enemy. And indeed the term "Fairi," which in our language means "*watch*," will lead any educated mind to that irresistible conclusion. In the Greek language "*phaos*," *light*, and "*h-orao*," to *see*, that is a house for *light to see*, have the same effect. So that in both languages we have the same key to the uses of the "*pharos*." There can be no doubt but that the kings of Egypt were called from these buildings, and that Pharoah-an-tuir was thus designated from the fact that he founded a prodigious tower of that character. The Gadeliens, in all their migrations, built towers along all the coast of the Mediterranean;—and we have an account of the great one built by Breogan, in Gallicia, in the Bay of Biscay, whence Ith took his departure for Ireland. Now, what could have interfered with our ancestors to prevent them from bearing enlightenment into this country; but all our native annalists, with scarcely an exception, say they did. Milesius himself, if we are to credit the concurrent testimony of our native writers, must have been an accomplished and courtly prince. Let us look to facts,—King Riffloir cherished him and gave him his daughter in marriage, and he became so popular in Scythia, that it was apprehended by the king the people would dethrone himself, and enthrone Golamh or Milesius; he went to Egypt, and Pharoah gave him his fair daughter Scotsa in marriage, and large possessions. What but his polished manners endeared him to these monarchs?—What but his erudition could have enabled him to cruise along the shores of the Mediterranean after his several voyages through the Black and Caspian Sea, the Archipelago—and uninterrupted? He must have been a man thoroughly acquainted with the use of shipping, and the languages of the places at which he touched. He remained for a time in Crete, Lacedemon—and

twelve months on a small island near Gibraltar ; it is now connected by a bridge with the land, and on it is built the city of Cadiz, which was founded about 1500 before Christ, by a Phœnician's colony—according to Anthon's Lempriere's classical dictionary, of whom Fenius, or Phœnius, the Scythian king already named, was the grand ancestor. This was assuredly the colony whose chief was Golamh, or Milesius, whose posterity invaded Ireland about 1300 years before Christianity, as Keating and other Irish annalists have it. He visited the country of the Goths, north of the Black Sea, which was overrun by the Visigoths. His object in having gone there was to pay a visit to a colony of his countrymen who settled in it, and who were harrassed by the Goths. The Gothland visited by Golamh was clearly north of Crete, as history tells us, that in sailing for Spain he left Crete on his left, which was south of the isle of Milos. Hosts of Goths overran all parts along the Euxine Sea, north and west towards the Danube and the other navigable rivers. Hence the popular error about the island "Gothia," or as some will have the matter, Getulia, in Africa. To this place he could have had no motive of attraction, as none of his friends, that I could learn, were there, and the land was not inviting. It was wild, and the habitable part was far removed from the coast ; it would not be wise for an adventurer, to go into the interior of such a country ; moreover, that he should have so done would have been inconsistent with the written account of Milesius' habit and character. Let us examine classical authorities for the truth of my statement: Lempriere writes, "Getæ, a tribe of the Scythians, who, according to Strabo, inhabited the plains lying between the Ister or Danube, and the Tyras or Dniester ; they were the same as the Goths." This, therefore, is plainly the Gothia alluded to by early Irish writers, and which made the learned Keating say that our ancestors sailed by a narrow sea northward, the fact being that he entered the Caspian, remained for a time on one of its islands, until he equipped his light fleet—(which must have resembled that mentioned by Cæsar as used by the aboriginal north-western Gauls in their naval fights with him)—proceeded thence to the Kur or Cyrus, along which he went until he met the majestic Phasis, on whose waters his fleet sailed into the Euxine; thence he steered north, to the people alluded to, who was Scythic—the invincible Dahæ, from the south-eastern shores of the Caspian, whose

country was called Hyrcania. These Getae, says Lempriere, were taught by Zenolxis the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and this belief made them fearless warriors, despising death. It was by this people, called by Virgil in his seventh book of *Æneid* "indomitable," that the vast army of Darius was cut off in the present Bessarabia, near the Danube, 485 years before Christ.

There cannot be the slightest doubt but that this was the Gethia or Gothia visited by Milesius, who visited also Thrace and Samothrace, in which Ir was born. To suppose that such a man did not carry with him letters would be absurd.* Moreover, the time of his voyaging was about the era of the Trojan war. He was in Mygdonia, the country of the opulent and grand Chorcæbus, the affianced husband of Cassandra, Priam's prophetess daughter. Any man who has read Homer must be aware of the polished manners of those days, and their perfection in the arts. This can be inferred from the great poet's description of Chorcæbus's chariots, horses, mansion, furniture, &c.—the polished finish of the armour of that remote period, the accomplished language he attributed to the chiefs, their arms, their gold cups—all these things tend to prove that enlightenment existed at that early epoch. Now, in the midst of such progress in the arts and sciences, which is universally admitted, first came from Scythia or Egypt, if you will so have it, it was impossible that Milesius could not have collected a knowledge of the polite arts. The very circumstance that we do not read of any mutiny having arisen amongst his followers is an evidence of a highly cultivated mind on the part of the admiral. Learning alone, and that of a high order, could have endeared him to his followers. In Crete he left after him some of his people, who were infirm, or weary of the voyage. It is certain that Minos and the Cretan sages, of whom history is loud in praise, were their offspring. Minos and Ollamh Fodhla (Ollav Fyola) were unquestionably of the same stock. This may be the place to clear up the objection urged against the co-existence and meeting of Moses and Niul. The former was born, as some writers have it, 1572 B.C.; Golamh was the twenty-first in descent from the latter, (both included). When we will have reflected that the age of man was longer then than now, and when we allow 30 years

* See Appendix.

to each generation, we can plainly see that Moses and Niul were contemporaneous: because 30 multiplied by 21 we have 630 years; and granting that Niul lived to be 180 years, which is not unreasonable (considering the great age of the patriarchs), we have the seeming difficulty solved, and the objection dissipated. But if we make another rational hypothesis, that 6 of the 21 generations did not marry until the age of 40, we will have the 180 years, allowed above to Niul, reduced to 120. Under the heading "Longevity," in Tegg's work, I find that in Straffan, Kildare, in 1833, W. Mortimer died at the age of 125; Lynch, at 150, in Jamaica. Within the last 12 months we had an instance in *The Freeman's Journal* of an Irishwoman having lived to the age of 121, and retaining all her faculties unimpaired up to her death. Within the same space of time we saw in the public journals several instances of men and women who lived beyond 100 years. Heber—from whom the Hebrew tongue was so called—and Niul lived at the same period. The former was the fifth from Shem, both inclusive; the latter was the fifth from Japhet, Shem's brother, counting both. Heber lived 464 years. If, therefore, I gave 300 years as the age of Niul, I had precedent, his great grandcousin having lived 464. The true space of time from the Flood to Moses is 776, which thus appears—the Flood 2348 B.C., Moses 1572 B.C. Therefore, 776 must be the period from the Flood to Moses. These three periods give me the world's age when Christ was born. Now, 630 years, the sum of the 21 generations, and giving Niul 146, in addition to 30 allowed as a generation, we have 776. It was about 272 years after the days of Moses that the Milesians landed in Ireland, that is 1300 years B.C. We are informed that Ith, who came here to reconnoitre before them, was looked on as a wise and learned man, so much so, that the native princes, sons of Carmody, referred their dispute to his judgment. What but a high opinion of his cultivated intellect could have induced them to bestow so high an honour on a stranger? The Trojan war occurred, according to some chronologists, about 1300 B.C. Scaliger says 1240, Eusibius 1261 B.C. This would place that remarkable fact at or about the time Ith arrived at our island. Though the works of Virgil and Homer abound in fiction, yet they substantially hand down to us the manners and habits of the times of which they write. Sir Isaac Newton maintains that Dido lived, not hundreds of years after Æneas, but was his contemporary, others say that Virgil and Ovid committed a

great anachronism by making them of the same time. However, this variance does not militate against the fact that they existed. It ought to be no cause of wonder that there should be a variation in dates of ancient facts, and a difference of opinion amongst authors about them, when we call to mind that the system of calculating was strokes or hieroglyphics, and if I would be permitted the use of the expression, by Ogham characters,* that even these were sometimes imperfectly engraven manuscripted, and that posterity had a great difficulty in deciphering them. Hence, if the stroke, occult mark, or ogham, were in any manner defaced, its value could merely be guessed at, and therefore each antiquarian had his own interpretation. Hence, therefore, we have the cause of the variation of dates. But pre-supposing that we had numbers as now, yet when it will be recollected that printing was not formerly used, an imperfect copyist might so write his arithmetical numbers as that one would be taken for another; thus, an imperfect 7 might be taken for 1, or *vice versa*—also an imperfect 3 for 5—or there might be an omission of a cypher. Such errors were almost inseparable from ancient records. Even typography has many gross blunders. The conclusion to be arrived at by this reasoning is, that the ancestors of the Irish must have had early enlightenment. The royal splendour of Dido in every particular, as well gold and silver plate of every description, and for every purpose, used at her table—the style and elegance of her palace—the order of serving up the banquet not equalled by courts of our own days—the servants so arranged as that in the twinkle of an eye the dish was no sooner out of the cook's hands than it was on the table. The embroidered vestments—carpets—the purple couches—the gilded ceiling—the brilliant lamps; the theatres—the temples—the law courts—all these at so early a period, testify a degree of extraordinary cultivation. Again, the magnificence of Priam's palace—the parapets—the turrets on its roof—its massive doors—its vestments—its numerous departments, united by private entrances—the splendid bedposts, ornamented with imported gold—the gorgeous dresses of Paris, Helen, Andromaché; these matters, together, evince an advanced state of refinement.

Troy was opposite to Samothrace, or Iærna—the island on

* I don't mean the characters called from Ogma, their inventor.

which Ir was born ; and a little south of the Thracian Chersonesus, some few degrees south-east of this was Phœnicia, a colony from Scythia, whence, as facts will prove, all enlightenment issued. Tyre, its capital, was the great emporium of commerce, the grand mart of manufactures, until the narrow-minded policy of Pygmalion, by his prohibitory laws and tariff duties, and by his own avaricious speculations in merchandise, gave a check to its prosperity. To it all nations, from Gades to Japan, had recourse, because of its pre-eminence in all sorts of mechanism and the fine arts. The ridiculous derivations of the term "phœnicia," given by modern philologists, excite a man's pity for such ignorance—whereas nothing can be so simple as to find the origin of the name in "Phœnius," or "Fenius," the Seythian monarch, grandfather of Gadelas, whose posterity refined the colony.* The identity of the Scythic or Irish tongue with that of Phœnicia—the manners, habits, tastes, and weapons of both the Milesians and Phœnicians leave no doubt on this point. Now, it is not at all likely that Golamh (Golar) who was of the same stock, and having travelled through such enlightened nations, was not a highly polished captain. I could show that one of his sons, shortly after having landed here, exhibited his skill as a poet. I have on this desk some of his poetry, after 3156 years—I mean Amherghin (Avereen). He sought, by the influence of his muse, to arrange the quarrel between his brothers Heber and Heremon. He flourished A.M. 2706, as can be seen in O'Clery's *Book of Invasions*, written 1632. We have already observed the unequalled skill of the Phœnicians in the fine arts. All historians set them down as having spread, amongst the surrounding nations, that knowledge in which themselves surpassed. This was Vallancey's opinion; it was that of the Earl of Ross ; and Doctor Parsons, of London, a writer of the eighteenth century. Fabulous writers, unacquainted with the Celtic language, were bewildered in conjectures about the origin of names, whereas, if they were aided by its benign rays, they had not been wandering in their darkened orbits. They, for want of such knowledge, give us Phœnix, (it should be Fenius), as the son of Agenor, and Cadmus as his grandson. But our Irish early annalists and poets, rational thinkers and vigorous writers, tell us common sense facts.

* The original inhabitants were descended of Ham,

They relate, that Fenius was the grandson of Faadh, who was the offspring of Magog, son of Japhet, son of Noah; that Gadelas was grandson of Niul, who was the successor of the royal linguist, Fenius. Now, as the letter "C" and "G" were often used one for the other, I am satisfied that Cadmus of visionary philologists, was no other than Gadelas; and that it was he, as our old historians record, that taught Greek in Achaia, but at a much earlier date than that in which it is asserted Cadmus introduced the alphabet into Greece. Gadelas, the linguist, son of Eathoir, of the posterity of Gomer, was erroneously taken for the son of Niul. It is true he was his near relative. We are not astonished at a jumbling of names in matters of such remote antiquity; I fear that in my attempt to bring out facts illustrative of my thesis, I am drawing too largely on your fund of patience. (No, no, and great applause; we could hear you for hours.) Well, then, I shall avail myself of your kind indulgence and follow up this branch of my subject. I will now introduce to your notice the talented and erudite Parsons—father, I believe, of the present distinguished and extraordinary astronomer, Lord Ross, whose vast mind and penetrating genius has been so zealously and successfully devoted to the contemplation of the heavens. When you will have heard some quotations from his brilliant work, a defence of *Ancient Ireland*—its early enlightenment—the truthfulness of its history—its high antiquity—its former renown, and its possession of letters and of arts, when other countries were barbarous—the effulgence of its literary lamp when England sat in darkness, you must positively agree that I am no enthusiast in the conclusions which I have formed with respect to the fame of our illustrious progenitors. He refers to the Trojan war, the weapons, and their finish. He places that fact about 1400* years before Christ, as does O'Flaherty. Lord Ross was known to be a great friend of England—never considered as partial to the Irish. However, when he found history clear as to the glory and renown of the Milesians, he had the honorable candour to defend Ireland against her slanderers; and most eloquently, but accurately—most elegantly, but practically, did he perform the eminent service, never to be forgotten. His advocacy has shed a lustre on

* As I said already, there is a difference of opinion as to the date. Some place the fact at 1200 B.C.

Irish literature. It is a rare occurrence to find a man having magnanimity sufficient to trample on hereditary prejudices, and becoming the defender—the zealous advocate of a proscribed people, and especially as his own ancestors were amongst the most relentless of what some persons denominate persecutors. You will please observe that I don't use the word in an offensive point of view, but to give cogency to any argument which I may build on his words. I shall take care never to abuse the privileges of a lecturer in such a hall as this; I know the great evil that would follow from such conduct. I trust that you can appreciate the reason of my application of the expression—(hear, and applause.) When we find a nobleman and a statesman taking up his pen to uphold the fame of our dear old land, it should serve as a stimulant to us all to glory in our descent, urge us to aim at a rivalry with our ancestors in arts and sciences, and above all, to avail ourselves of every advantage to improve ourselves in the knowledge of the Celtic tongue, without which no man has any claim to be an antiquarian, nor an accurate and a learned historian. He must take opinions for facts; he must be satisfied with conjecture for conviction; he must be content with borrowed authority, which will decidedly mislead him. I may now premise that, in quoting from Sir Laurence Parsons, or Lord Ross, I differ in some instances from his deductions. To give you a mere condensation of his language would be only substituting my own inornate composition for his graceful and elegant diction. I shall therefore read for you some passages in extenso; as the antiquity of Ireland and its early possession of letters are intimately connected, the quotations shall refer to both topics. “The first who mentions it is Orpheus. In his *Argonautica*, speaking of Jason and the Argonauts,* he says, “then they went by the island of Jernis.” That by Jernia he meant Ireland, I prove by the authority of Camden, the great antiquarian of England; also by the authority of the learned Archbishop Usher; also by the authority of Bochart; also by the authority of Andreas Schottus; also by the authority of Stephanus. Thus is Ireland mentioned by this Greek writer expressly by name, long before the name of England is anywhere to be found in Grecian literature. What follows? That it would not have been the first noticed if it

* 232 Before Christ.

had not been the first known. Thus the poet Orpheus marks the situation of Ireland with great accuracy, and names it as if it were a place well known, and which would ascertain the limits of his course. But he does not name England, or Scotland, or France, or any other country near Ireland, and by which the Argo, in the course which he represented her to have taken, must have passed. And why? Because they were not known; for if they were, we must suppose that Orpheus would have mentioned them particularly by name, as he has all the nations in succession from Thessaly to the Sea of Saturn; especially as by doing so he would have marked his course more precisely, and given a greater appearance of truth to his relation."

"Camden, however, who wished to make his country participate in this ancient memorial, has endeavoured to prove that the Greeks were not at this time entirely ignorant of England, though they had not a name for it. If it be objected that the ancient Greeks did not navigate seas so distant as the northern parts of the Atlantic and the Sea of Saturn, I answer, that I do not mean to assert that they did; but that the Phœnicians did; and from them the Greeks obtained their knowledge of those remote parts of the world—of this knowledge many authors of high authority think that Homer, in his *Odyssey*, as well as Orpheus, in his *Argonautics*, availed himself. Not that they suppose that either Ulysses or Jason actually sailed into the Atlantic, but that these poets, to give more variety to their poems, represent them to have done so. Strabo is of opinion, that a great part of the scenery of the *Odyssey* is placed in the Atlantic, Plutarch says that the island of Calypso, mentioned by Homer, is an island on the west of Britain. He also says that Homer took his notion of the infernal regions from the country of the Cimmerians, who lived near the North Pole. And he says that in one of the islands near "Britain, the barbarians feign that Saturn was imprisoned by Jupiter, and hence the North sea was called the sea of Saturn." And Strabo says that Artemidorus asserts,* "that there is an island near Britain, where Ceres and Proserpine are worshipped with the same rites as in Samothrace; and Bochart "supposes that these ceremo-

* Here is an evidence that the mythology of Greece and Rome were in use in Ireland.

nies were introduced there by the Phœnicians. Others who wish to confine Ulysses to the Mediterranean islands, but think, however, that Homer represents him as having passed into the Atlantic, suppose some of the Mediterranean islands—by a poetic license—transferred to the Atlantic. But this supposition is so inconsistent with that attention to geographical accuracy, which Homer in all the other parts of his poems has observed, that it is quite inadmissable. Hesiod places the gardens of the Hesperides in the Atlantic, near the territory of Atlas. It is very probable, therefore, that the Atlantic, both to the north and south, had been navigated before the time of Hesiod and Homer; Herodotus, the most ancient writer extant in Greek prose, says of Europe, “no one knows, whether on the east, or on the north, the sea flows round it.” What follows? that it was known in his time, that the sea flowed round the south and the west, and consequently that the Atlantic had been navigated from the pillars of Hercules to Ireland.”

Bochart is so certain, that he says “it must have been from the Phœnicians that Orpheus learned the name of Ireland, for these places at that time had not been visited by the Greeks.”

“After that invasion it was warmly contested by Julius Cæsar at Rome, whether England was an island or not, so little did they know of it; nor was the fact ascertained until the time of Agricola, that is several hundred years after Orpheus expressly names the island of Ireland. Besides, Aristotle mentions a commerce carried on between the Carthaginians and the islands beyond the pillars of Hercules, which would not have been the case if the Carthaginians themselves had any intercourse with those islands. It must therefore have been from the Phœnicians, and not from the Carthaginians, that Aristotle and all the Greeks antecedent to his times, received their information concerning Ireland.”

Consequently the Greeks themselves had no intercourse with the Gades,* and therefore they could have had none with the Britannic isles, which are so much more distant, and to which they could not sail without passing the Gades. If, then, neither the Greeks nor the Carthaginians had any intercourse with the Britannic isles at the early period I have been treating of, I think any reasonable man will agree with Bochart, that it must

* Now “Cadiz” in the south west of Spain.

have been from the Phœnicians that the Greeks learned the name of Ireland; and consequently that the Phœnicians were acquainted with Ireland before this poem by Orpheus was written, according to every opinion about it, not later than the time of Pisistratus; it follows, that the Phœnicians were acquainted with Ireland, with its situation; for the poem describes it exactly and with its name, about the time of Pisistratus, that is above 500 years before Christ.

How did the Phœnicians obtain this lead which they imported from Ireland into Greece? Must it not have been by one of these two ways:—Either that the Phœnicians wrought these mines themselves, or got them by barter from the aboriginal Irish.

“It is, therefore, much more probable that some Phœnicians went there, as some of the old annals of Ireland relate, casually at first, and established themselves there, and in process of time afterwards, as they increased in numbers and extended themselves into the country and explored its recesses, that they discovered these mines. Consequently it was not until several ages after the first settlement of the colony into Ireland that lead was imported thence into Greece; and as we know to a certainty that it was imported so early as in the time of Herodotus, and probably long before, it follows that the Phœnician colony was settled in Ireland many ages before Herodotus, that is, many ages before one who flourished 500 years before Christ, and probably, therefore, about the time in which Sir Isaac Newton says that the Phœnicians first visited these northern seas; that is, as he says, in the time of the Phœnician Hercules;* that is, he says, immediately after the destruction of Troy; that is, above 3000 years ago. So great, from reasonable inference, appears to have been the antiquity of the Phœnician settlement in Ireland; and this accords with the ancient annals of the country.” Newton was born A.D. 1642. If, then, we suppose what is reasonable, that his opinion of the Milesian colony was given in the fifty-eighth year of his age, (A.D. 1700,) his period of 3000, squares exactly with the native writers. For clearly $1700 \div 1300 = 3,000$. Hence it is that most good writers admit the genuineness of the Irish annals. I am bound, however, to dissent from Newton as to his era of the Trojan war, which did not occur until 120 years

* I am inclined to think that this Hercules was Golamh.

later. Facts and circumstances alluded to elsewhere would show this. Besides, I am sustained in my view by many writers. Burns, in his chronology, says that Troy was built 1255,* B.C., and was burnt on the night of the 11th of June, 1148, B.C.

"Now, the name Albion is of Irish etymology, "Albin," signifying *mountainous*, from "*alb*," a mountain—the very character of this country—and this part was also colonized from Ireland—this colonization is asserted by all the venerable English writers; scarcely any one has ever denied it; and the inhabitants there, at this day, speak a dialect of the Irish, or Erse, as they call it. Nay, Camden considers it so certain that he says—"That if all histories were lost, and no writings made it known that we English were descended from the Germans, and genuine Scots from the Irish, and the Armorican Britains from our Britains; yet, the communion of languages alone would clearly evince it—nay, more clearly than the authorities of the most profound historians." The inference that I make from this is, that Aristotle having called England *Albion*, (and here let me observe that when I say England, I mean the whole island, using the modern and familiar name to avoid confusion with the old names of which I am speaking,) Aristotle, I say, having called England *Albion*, and having got that name from the Phœnicians, for reasons already stated, the Phœnicians must have got it from the Irish, it being applicable to that part of the island only which was peopled by the Irish. "For if the Phœnicians in their voyages to England had taken the name of the country from the inhabitants themselves, it would have been from some southern part which they had visited, and they would have given it a name to be found in the southern districts, which *Albion* was not, for that they, sailing from the south, should pass every southern and western part of England till they came so far north as *Allin*, and thence denominate the island, is not to be supposed. Whereas no supposition can be more probable than that the Irish should name England to the Phœnicians from that part of the island which they best knew, and which had been colonised from them, and with which they kept up a continual intercourse. One more word concerning this passage in Aristotle: he says "that the Britannic isles are *ALBION* and *JERNA*."

"Cæsar received the term "*Britannic* from the Greeks, and

* Tegg says it was begun 1546 B.C., and ended 1184.

the Greeks must have received it, as I have already proved, from the Phœnicians, and therefore it is most probable that the Phœnicians, as Bochart says, were the authors of it, and that it was in their language expressive of the situation or product of those islands. Again, as the Greeks use this term as a general and common name for both islands equally, it must have been so used by the Phœnicians from whom they received it. In fine, I say, if any one imagines from finding England called Britain distinctively in latter times, that it was so called anciently, and antecedent to Julius Cæsar, it is an error. And consequently, if any one from finding Ireland anciently denominated a British isle, would therefore infer that in ancient times England was of more note, and that Ireland was thus only implicated in a name which peculiarly belonged to England, it is an error likewise. And consequently it cannot be inferred from Ireland having been anciently called a Britannic isle by the Greeks, that therefore the Phœnicians were better acquainted, or at all acquainted with England, or that they at all implicated Ireland in a term appropriate to England, as this term was so peculiarly appropriated until centuries after."

"I have now shewn, first, that the Greeks, and therefore the Phœnicians, were acquainted with Ireland before they knew anything of England; and if it was mentioned by them at all, it was only mentioned as a waste without even a name. Secondly, that what knowledge they afterwards got of it was from Ireland, and that they gave it a name only from that northern part which was colonised from Ireland. And thirdly, that the word Britannic was only a name of external origin, imposed by the Phœnicians, and equally applicable to both islands, and therefore no inferences in favour of ancient note or eminence in England can be thence derived."

"If this will not satisfy, let it be recollected, when external authorities are called for to confirm the ancient history of this country, the neighbouring nations were barbarous and unlettered; or at least that they have no ancient records now to appeal to. Let it be also recollected that the Phœnicians were the only distant nations that anciently navigated these seas, and that they are long since extinct. That their ancient records have all perished, and that there is scarcely a memorial of them now remaining, except such brief fragments as are to be found in Josephus, Theophilus, or Sanconiathos, which are

little more than the barren chronicles of some of those kings, without any account of their colonies or commerce. What then is to be done when we are called upon for ancient attestations of our history, but to collect, as I have endeavoured to do, the rare and scattered mention that has been made of these islands by the Greeks, and thence to deduce by reasonable inferences a judgment of the time at which the Phœnicians became acquainted with them, and of the knowledge which they had of them, and to compare these afterwards with the Irish accounts?

"I do not mean to say that Ireland was not inhabited before the arrival of the Phœnicians, but that the Phœnicians made a settlement there, and immediately, or by degrees, obtained a complete dominion over the ancient inhabitants, and established in the island their laws, religion, and language. To prove, then, that the Irish were a Phœnician colony, and here I shall begin with their language, which, as Camden says, is the great confirmation of this question, and the most certain argument of the original of nations; for, that they who have the same language have the same origin, I think no one will deny. Now, it is universally admitted that the Carthaginians originally came from Phœnicia, and spoke the Phœnician language; and a specimen of that language has been preserved by Plautus in one of his plays which contains some speeches of Hanno, a Carthaginian, in the language of his country and these speeches appear, upon examination, to be evidently and undeniably the same language with the Irish."

The Carthaginians and the Irish were descended from one common parent country. Now we know to a certainty that the Carthaginians were descended from the Phœnicians, and I have shown already from Greek authorities, that the Phœnicians must have had very early intercourse with this island. Is there then a reasonable man upon earth who will not rather believe that the Irish were a colony from Phœnicia than from Carthage, and that they must have been a colony from either the one or the other, the identity of their language has proved?

"It being established *whence* the Irish colony emigrated, the next point to be determined is, when it emigrated. And this I think, may be pretty nearly determined by the Pagan worship of the Irish at the time of the introduction of Christianity into the island; I mean by such facts of their worship as are undisputed. That the Pagan Irish worshipped the sun and moon,

and the ancient deities of the Phœnicians, and indeed of most nations, and that these were their principal deities all writers are agreed; also that they did not worship images. Now, of this we may be certain, that the period when Christianity was introduced into Ireland, they worshipped all the Pagan deities that had been worshipped by their Phœnician ancestors at the time of their emigration. For though a people in that state of primitive civilisation in which they were might have added to the number of their deities, we cannot suppose that they diminished their number; for this would be utterly inconsistent with their dark and superstitious state. Neither, for the same reason, can we suppose, if the Phœnicians had worshipped images before the emigration of the Irish colony, that the Irish would not have continued to do so. I shall not, however, attempt to determine the precise instant when those Egyptian and Syrian deities, unknown to the Pagan Irish, were adopted by the Phœnicians, or when precisely the Phœnician worship of them commenced; but merely state that all the writers are agreed that it was at a very early period, and when the Phœnician history is in great obscurity, and therefore without spending any more time about it, I shall apply to the Irish the observations of the learned authors of the "Ancient Universal History," in their account of the Numidians. They say, speaking of the sun and moon, as being the principal deities of the Numidians, "this is a convincing proof of their high antiquity, as clearly evincing that the emigration of the first colony which peopled this country, preceded the introduction of image worship into the Pagan world."

This is assuredly the most reliable testimony in favor of the very early peopling of Ireland after the Flood. Nothing can be clearer than that the Pagans, who first came here, would have brought with them their idols if such they had. Their not having done so places beyond all manner of doubt the fact that Ireland was colonised before the Milesian invasion, because whether that era was 1300 years before Christ, or later, history tells that Greece, Troy, and other eastern nations had their deities, and consequently the children of Golamh would have introduced their idols. It is true they worshipped divinities, such as the sun, moon, &c., but not graven images. If they did, we have no account of them until 1144 B.C., in the reign of Tighernas, whose idol was the same as that of Zoroaster of Bactria, or CROM CRUAD, to whom altars were

erected in a plain in Brefney, and had votaries until the days of St. Patrick. The theory that Ireland was not peopled until the time of Rome, is refuted by the very fact that the Milesians had not images. Therefore they too must have arrived here before image worship, unless we agree with Doctor Parsons of London—already alluded to—who holds that the first inhabitants of Ireland worshipped the true God. He states that the offspring of Ham began to adore their ancestors as gods, when they abandoned the true God—but that the Clanna Phœnius adored the God of Heber. He adds that they introduced the true religion here, but afterwards the people were perverted: his work is deeply interesting.

Now, I maintain that in addition to the above passage, we have this matter-of-fact proof of the early migration of the Irish colony:—All, or most of their war instruments and weapons were of brass; there can be no attempt to deny this fact, as many of them are to be found in our country this very day; weapons of exactly the same shape and substance, found at Cannæ, supposed to be Carthaginian, are to be seen in the British Museum. This circumstance, Parsons concludes, places the migration about the time of Cadmus, but certainly anterior to the Trojan war. If it had been after, he states, the colonists would have brought with them more arts—would have introduced deities and image worship, which all scholars admit to have been in great vigor about the period of the siege of Troy. I need not refer to the penates, nor the images of the gods which the Trojan women worshipped and embraced on the night Troy was on fire. Nor is it necessary to direct your attention to Æneas, bringing with him his gods to Latium. Idolatry was widespread throughout Greece and Asia Minor fully 1200 years before. Wherefore it is clear that Ireland must have been peopled long anterior to that period. For history tells, that Golamh resided in these places, and no doubt would have brought with him image worship if he arrived later than 1200 B.C.

THE BOLLANDISTS REFUTED.

From such premises I draw these conclusions:—That Ireland was at a very early period known to the Phœnicians—(what Doctor Parsons call *Clanna Fenius*)—that it was colonised by them before the Trojan war—that they introduced here such arts as they knew—that letters, for which they were famous, were amongst those arts: they could not, Parsons adds, without the use of letters have preserved, for so many

ages, their language uncorrupt, and retaining such a close conformity with the original. Besides, we all know that the invaders have ever brought their own language into the country, conquered by them; the English did it here—the Normans and Saxons in England. Camden writes, “The Anglo-Saxons flocked to Ireland as to the market of refined letters, and thence they seem to have received the system of forming letters, whereas they have clearly used the same character that is in use amongst the Irish.” Wormins says that the Icelanders call one of their alphabets “*Ireletur*,” or the “*Irish letter*.” “Doctor Parsons alleges that “from a thorough investigation of the subject, it will be probable that all the neighbouring nations got their alphabets from Ireland; and that laws, fashions, and war, the sword, could never entirely destroy the ancient language of Ireland.” Now in this place Parsons might have gone a little farther and said, that this fact puts beyond all doubt, that the Irish alphabet is an original one. He says there was no one like it but the Lybian or Carthaginian; and he in another place shews it could not be that. It therefore follows, that we have in Ireland our alphabet from Gadelas, or Gael of Scythia, 700 years before the wolf suckled Romulus, before a wall was drawn round the Eternal City of the Seven Hills. I am therefore no enthusiast when I believe that in our language there is something divine—that it can never be uprooted from the old soil. Pliny states, that Cadmus introduced into Greece sixteen letters, whilst others say the number was eighteen. Herodotus tells us that arts, sciences, and letters, issued out of Babylon. Now this, according to Moses, is most probable, and accords exactly with our own old writers as to what they relate with respect to Fenius Farsa, as I before told you. Some learned men say that the Hebrew letters were anciently only seventeen, which is the number of the Irish—I cannot now be certain what was the precise form of the original Irish alphabet, as letters may change, though not the language.

Plutarch relates that when the tomb of Alcmena was destroyed by Agesilaus, the Greeks of that day could not read the inscription on it. Lord Ross mentions that Greece and Carthage, being in a manner subdued by the Romans, adopted for a time the Roman character, but afterwards took up their own, which was certainly Phœnician. It is stated that the Irish ancient numerals are identical with some of those of Phœnicia.

This is only reasonable. For no matter what length of time or extent of seas and lands intervene, the language of all colonies will be identical with, or at least have a great affinity to that of the parent, whence they migrated. The posterity of the Irish soldiers who remained at the Alps after the death of Dathi, in the fourth century, retain yet a pure dialect of our vernacular. Mr. Beaufort says, "By these (the Irish alphabet) we are empowered to assert that the Irish Druids had the method of communicating their doctrine and learning to writing. That the letters made use of for this purpose, bear a great affinity to those of the ancient Phœnicians, Carthaginians, and Egyptians; in many cases they are exactly the same." The Druids of Ireland taught their pupils in groves, and imposed on the letters or characters they invented the names of trees, which possessed medicinal properties, thus teaching letters, and the science of medicine by one and the same act. We are told that St. Patrick gave us our letters!!!! This is an egregious error, contrary to fact and history. It is a most positive fact that we had our alphabet centuries before Rome was built; we had learning and letters fully at least 1300 years before St. Patrick was born in "Holy Tower, a Roman fort, not far from Calais, in France, where his father was with the Roman army. I will be able to prove my position from the evidence of facts before I have closed this lecture. It is true that St. Patrick gave the Roman alphabet to his pupil Fiagh, that thereby he might the sooner prepare him for holy orders. Not that the Roman character was easier than the Irish, but the Roman missionary wished to establish an uniformity in the mode of instruction for his pupils and converts, especially for those intended for the Church, that himself and they might join in prayer in the same language, composed in the same characters. There is an incident worth notice, that in fifteen days Fiagh could read and understand the Latin psalms. This could not be so unless he was thoroughly a proficient in the knowledge of some characters before that. You can all clearly see that it would be impossible for a man, wholly unacquainted with letters, to make such rapid progress in a language so learned and so difficult of attainment as the Latin is admitted to be. But Fiagh, afterwards St. Fiagh, Bishop of Sletty, was a graceful adept in the old Irish. Let us see what our own native writers tell us, and what no man ever has denied. We are told by them that

when St. Patrick was crossing the country from the north to classic Mayo, to celebrate the Lent and the Easter at Cnoc Aichle (Eagle Hill) he called to visit Dubtagh, the Druid, and the great poet laureate of King O'Leary, and who was the first convert. During his visit he inquired if the distinguished convert could recommend any person for the mission. He was told that he had a comely youth, who was also a convert, but who was now gone to the north of Mayo with a present of poems to the chieftain of that country; that when he had returned he would introduce him. Now, I ask, how could Fiagh have poems to be given as a present, and of his own composition, if he was not a proficient in the use of letters, able to mould them into any shape. The hypothesis is quite absurd. Again, if Ireland had not an alphabet before the great apostle, it is very strange that the Roman characters were not continued in general use. I would be glad to learn who gave us the Celtic letters, at what age, in what monarch's time?—the when, the where, the manner how we obtained them, would be an interesting piece of information. Our historians give no records of these things. The annals are silent on the point. It therefore remains that they came to us as has been sufficiently shewn by me. Parsons states that there is no alphabet like ours but the Lybian, and he shews that was Phœnician, not Roman. In the next place the Roman alphabet has twenty-six letters, we have only seventeen. How comes it that we lost nine of the number? The letters of the two alphabets have different names; that would not be if Rome gave us our letters. St. Fiagh wrote a life of St. Patrick in the Irish language, applying the Irish characters. Hence it is clear that that was the language with which he was better acquainted. This in itself proves that he had letters before the apostle gave them to him. St. Seschnall, Bishop of Dunshaughlin, another disciple of Patrick's, wrote a hymn in praise of his great master, and he used the Irish characters, though the language was Roman or Latin, through which Seachnall obtained his education and mission in Rome. He preached in Ireland for nine years, when he died and was buried in Dunshaughlin. These two latter incidents would be quite sufficient to establish a refutation of the calumny that we had no alphabet until St. Patrick gave it to us. I should have said, that if the Apostle introduced the alphabet, it would contain the same number of letters, the same order of letters,

the same character of letters, as ours does, but in none of these instances are the Roman and Irish characters similar. Until lately our alphabet ran thus: *Beith, luis, nion*, thence called "*Beithlius nion*," whereas the other is termed *alphabet*, as commencing with *alpha, beta*. The form and number are different, the Latin characters being seven more than ours, and more easily written, and for the latter reason also it is clear our ancestors would not have given it up for one more difficult of manusing, if it were their original mode of writing. I have to apologise for having occupied so much time in refuting such a calumny; but as some parties, not linguists, nor historians, but they whose words written or spoken, because of their position, might mislead the unthinking, I deemed it my solemn duty to give the real state of the case in as plain a point of view as I could. I am rejoiced that this question can be handled as a purely literary one, having no reference whatever to religion or politics. All parties can hear it and arrive at their own conclusion. In the work entitled "*Ancient Ireland*," I flatter myself I exhibited this country in her real character, as before every other nation, in the number, brilliancy, and variety of her scholars, even in her renown in arms, and her fame in every accomplishment as regards the fine arts and polite literature of every description. (Here there was a sudden outburst of applause, which was repeated several times.) It is objected to us that if our letters were from Phœnicia or the Scythians, our ancestors would have written from right to left as the Greeks, who borrowed their alphabet from the Phœnicians, did. I have to say that in the time of Herodotus, the Greeks wrote from left to right. This we learn from his surprise at the Egyptians writing the contrary way (book ii., chapter 36.) The Irish might have originally written after the same manner, but changed, as did the Greeks. I understand that inscriptions have been discovered in this country, executed from right to left. The Greeks called this system *Boustrophedon*, as it resembled the course of the plough; we call it the *reaper's path*.

Many other circumstances could be touched on regarding our alphabet, but it is to be hoped that I have spoken sufficient to shew its great antiquity.

Bollandus was quite wrong in having inferred from Colgan having said that Patrick gave the Pagan Irish an "*abjectoria*," or alphabet, that they had no letters before that time. Now the

learned Colgan expressly taught the contrary, whereas in the same chapter he alludes to the poems composed by Fiagh himself, and especially to that about St. Patrick. He also alludes to the composition of Saint Benignus, partly in Latin, and partly in Irish, namely, "The Book of Rights." From this circumstance Harris clearly proves that the Irish had their own characters before St. Patrick. Cæsar, Pliny, and others tell us the Druids were learned; that they knew philosophy, theology, and other sciences; that the Druids of Gaul who wished to be perfected in the knowledge of their mysteries, went to Britain to be instructed in them. Ward, in his book of "Irish Antiquities," (cap. 5) informs us that the Druidical order was established in Ireland in the days of Cæsar, and that they had the advantage of the same sciences and letters as amongst all the nations of ancient and modern times. Doctor Parsons, who makes the Milesian invasion so very early, "states they had their Druids with them in all their wanderings from Scythia.

Between the Hebrew and Irish characters this difference exists. The former are the names of various objects, whilst our letters are all the names of trees. This happened from the fact that the Druids inhabited woods, and imposed names with which they were acquainted; and, moreover, in this way they sought to make a lasting impression on their pupils with respect to the medical art. The trees which they selected for the names of their characters, possessed curative qualities. In this point of view our alphabet has no equal. I may here observe that our progenitors, like the Egyptians, had their characters for sacred as well as profane purposes. This character, you are aware, was the Ogham to which I have already directed attention. This is referred to by Monsieur Gebelin, in his work, "*Origine de l'Ecriture*," as well as by Baily. They state, that "the Irish Ogham resembles the characters at Persepolis." There are many of those characters still legible on stones in this country. On these the primitive Gadeliens wrote to commemorate the death of a hero, or a mystery of religion. The ancient Greeks built their monuments to the dead, and their temples of rude stones. So Brigant tells; and before images such stones were worshipped by the Greeks, and I make no doubt but the Pagan Irish did the same. The latter generally wrote on tables of wood, which were made of beech. From this circumstance, Parsons

and Camden argue that the English got their letters from us. They say that the term "boc or buec" is *Saxon*, and means a *beech tree*. Why dwell so long on the letters? To place beyond cavil the antiquity of our alphabet and our enlightenment; at the same time not with a wish to cast a stigma on nations not so early blessed in that respect as we were. This too manifests what a vigorous class of thinkers our ancestors were. Names were imposed, not arbitrarily, but from some causes; Keating and Gratianus, or Rev. Doctor Lynch, Archdeacon of Tuam, refer to several Irish Pagan works. Our early polish is freely confessed by every unbiassed scholar. Camden states, "that the antiquity of all other nations is in respect to that of the Irish mere novelty." Daniel, Gildas, and Rider (alias Knight) bear testimony to the fact, and they say "that up to the time of the Saxons and Normans, the English writers have no reliable annals." This we can ourselves learn by a glance at their history. In the days of Egilfrid or Elfrid, king of Northumbria, there was scarcely any literature in the sister isle. That unfortunate prince learned, I may say, his alphabet in the great Abbey of Mayo, whose ivy-mantled walls are still standing, having defied the influences of man and time. He was forced into hospitable and learned kire by his wicked subjects, whom Charlemagne denounced as *murderers of their lords*. Here all exiles, and the persecuted of other nations, found a home and a secure asylum, and had nothing to pay. In the reign of Alfred the Great, when England had hardly a knowledge of any language, our ancestors were so learned, that it is falsely stated some of them wrote lucid elaborate fictions. But as Lord Ross very properly observes, "if these documents were forged, and not *genuine*, there would be some traces of novelty about them. Who can prove the fiction? There must be an end put to the audacity of any one person presuming to pronounce on our venerable relics of antiquity. No age ever went by in which Ireland did not distinguish herself in the race of literature. It could be truly asserted that the writers of this country have been numerous as the stars, when twilight is fading into darkness in a frost. See O'Reilly's and Harris's account.

Josephus relates, "that such was the precaution of the Phœnicians, lest the memory of their transactions should perish, that their wisest men always secretly preserved them in public records. They kept a most accurate register of

ancient occurrences. They did so because their religious institutions enjoined it as a duty. We are then to conclude that the Irish colony of Clanna Fenius, besides the letters and religion of their ancestors, brought with them, and religiously preserved, the records of their nation, their pedigrees, and principal transactions. This opinion is forcibly put by Lord Ross, who says, "that though the history of the predecessors of the Milesians is not unworthy of notice, he would not dwell on it." Let me observe, that a few journalists who reviewed my work, seemed not satisfied that I took notice of the colonies alluded to. Yet I am glad to find that so distinguished a writer as Parsons did not reject their history as entirely fabulous. That is exactly what I did. What was consistent with reason I preserved, having passed over the rest as doubtful. Parsons says, "let it be recollected that the history, until the colony leaves Phœnicia, is properly Phœnician, and not Irish, then it may not be so unpalatable. The Irish and Mosaic account of the creation of the world, and the history of the human race, are substantially the same until the third generation from Noah. So far, therefore, the Irish account cannot be questioned. At this place* they separate. Our genealogists derive our descent from Magog, son of Japhet, son of Noah; Magog's sons are not named by Moses—it was not necessary for him to do so—Keating who thoroughly explored our native records says, that Magog had three sons, Baath, Jobhath, Fathada, (Baw, Jova, Faha,)—then Parsons writes, "there is a chasm of one generation from Baath to Phenius, who was contemporary with Moses." Phenius was their king, and Scythia their country. Josephus relates "that after the Flood Magog established a colony called Magogians, by themselves." On this Ross comments thus, "this, word for word, agrees with the Irish account. We then ask, how could the chronologers or minstrels of Ireland know that Magog was the ancestor of the Scythians. Did they understand, or did they read Josephus? The name of their parent country they say was Scythia, their progenitors Scythians, but they sometimes call them Pheni or Phœnicians." Parsons and Raleigh were bewildered as to the exact spot whence our ancestors originally

* Some writers maintain that "*Magog*" was the *land of Gog*. "*Magh Gog*," or Magog means "*Mac Gog*," son of Gog.

migrated. I shewed from the language of our old books in our own archives, that the place was towards the north-east of the Caspian, whence Fenius went to Babylon for the purpose of learning Adam's language from Heber, with whom it remained after the confusion of tongues. This I fully explained in "Ancient Ireland." The present Independent or Western Tartary was the primitive Scythia. In course of time, as the colonies streamed from it, the term Scythia was applied to a vast extent of country; all the north and west, and a very little to the south-east, towards the Himalaya mountains. However, Raleigh was not far from the mark in having placed it north-east of Palestine. Josephus makes a brother of Magog to be the founder of Tyre.* Hence, therefore, the manifest cause of the identity of the Phœnician, Carthaginian, and Hibernian dialects. "Byrsa" is a Phœnician name for "hide;" "Barsagh" is the Irish for a "scolding woman," or "*shrew*," meaning that the lash of her tongue is as cutting as that of a cow-hide thong.

I have already stated the variation of time as to when Cadmus, whom I assume to be Gadelas, settled in Achaia. Parsons says that Niul and Moses were of the same time—that is about 1572† years before Christ: when he was on Sinai, is just the time, it is said, Cadmus went to Thebes. Moses was 1572 B.C. Not to occupy your time on this point, I refer back to a previous remark. Now it was when Fenius lived, as our Irish chronologists relate, that Gadelas the linguist,

* Thiras.

† Parsons himself says that the emigration in the time of Fenius was two generations before Moses, according to Irish history. Now a generation is only thirty years, and two but sixty years. If, then, he admits, as he avers, that two generations only had elapsed, these generations are Niul and Gadelas. Niul was twenty years when Fenius resumed the diadem. We are to assume Niul ruled the schools for many years before he was invited to Egypt by Pharaoh Cingeris; and Irish history says that Gadela was more than an infant when the Israelites fled from Egypt. There is nothing anachronistic nor unreasonable in making Moses of the posterity of Shem, co-existent with Niul, of the posterity of Japhet. Therefore you cannot infer from reasoning, founded on Scripture chronology, that there was an anachronism in stating that Moses and Niul met on the banks of the sea. Shem lived eleven generations (his own included), 221 years after Ireland was first colonised. He died 2158 of the world, at the age of 601 years. Niul's genealogy is this: Noah, Japhet, Gog, Magog, Baadth, Faadth, Fenius, Niul, Gadelas. To put the question in the clearest point of view, let me suppose (and I have a perfect right to suppose) that Japhet lived as long as his eldest brother, Shem—that is, until the year of the world 2158. It was on this

professed Greek in Achaia; so far these facts coincide. The question of geneology does not form a part of my present topic, I shall not therefore enter upon it as a question.

VERACITY OF IRISH HISTORY.

Before I close this part of the lecture, it may be interesting to know, that Ogygia was the name of one of the gates of Thebes, in Achaia, built by Cadmus or Gadelas. Now such is one of the ancient names of Ireland. Cadmus erected a temple to Oga, the goddess of wisdom. She was the same as Athenæ of the Greeks. This fact is worthy of notice, as tracing the identity of Cadmus and Gadelas. In other words, that Cadmus was Gadelas. "The coincidences mentioned by me, observes Parsons, are conclusive as to the antiquity and veracity of Irish history. The Irish, it is maintained, did not read Herodotus. They, therefore, had no other way to learn the events of the eastern countries but through their own records." And, he adds, "that native records are the purest guide to trace the origin and transactions of any tribe." He continues, "if you allow the Irish to have had any record of those times, their having mentioned Moses ought not to invalidate their history. "Because," he has remarked, though Dios and Menander mention Solomon, and Berosus speaks of Nebuchodonosor, and Manetho and Choeremon talk of Moses, yet no one doubts the authenticity of the fragments of their histories. He argues "that the Irish writers say the Phœnician colony supplied the Israelites with provisions, and then moved down the Red Sea with their ships." So relates Rabbi Simon, who lived 200 years before Christ. "And because

year Shem died; at the age of 600, just 274 years before Moses.

Flood, 1656 A.M.
2 years after that Shem was 100 years old;

World's age, 1658 when Shem is 100 years old;
Add to this 500 Shem's age, omitting 100 years included above;

Age of world, 2158 at Shem's death;
Add to this 274 from Shem's death to the time of Moses;

Age of world, 2432 when Moses met Niul;
Add to this 1572 years from Moses to birth of Christ;

Age of world 4004 at birth of Christ.

these Canaan (Phœnician) ships gave Israel of their provisions, God would not destroy their ships, but with an east wind carried them far down the Red Sea." This is precisely the Irish version of the event. No person will attempt to say that our ancient writers received their information from the writings of the Rabbi. This harmony in narration must be accounted for thus:—The Rabbi got it from the Jews, and the Irish had it from their ancestors. Parsons explains away the apparent difference in other respects between the Jewish and Scripture account. He shews "that the Greeks knew nothing of Ireland unless what they heard from the Phœnicians, and that the Roman writers can afford no evidences, as both England and Ireland were wholly unknown to them until the time of Julius Cæsar, which, he says, was about 1000 years posterior to the landing of the colony. It is strange, that authors should attempt to traduce the character of a people of whom they knew nothing until after the time of Julius Cæsar." "Strabo, (adds Parsons) Diodorus Siculus, Mela, and Solinus, asperse the Irish nation, and yet they never set their feet on its shores; they got their information from men, who likewise were never in Ireland; their aspersions therefore are not to be noticed; they don't even say that they received their account from persons who visited Ireland; they were consequently, he says, quite unacquainted with the internal polity and manners of the people. Wherefore, the ancient history of Ireland can never be refuted by external authority, which is not to be relied on." Lord Ross then deals severely and summarily with the plagiarist Mac Pherson, whom he accuses of having claimed for Scotland the poems of *Ossian*, and having scandalously corrupted them. The poet Firccheirtne, who composed a code of Irish laws, in the reign of the Monarch, Connor Mac Nessa, at the birth of Christ, wrote the *Uricept*, or grammar of the Irish language. Cinfaola, or the Learned, corrected it in the reign of King Donald, A.D. 624. His writings have been ever looked up to as a criterion of purity in Celtic literature; they are referred to in the annals of the Four Masters. His poem, relative to the advent of the Milesians, has internal evidence of its authenticity. It is to be found in the book of Ballymote, folio xi., column 2, compiled in the fourteenth century; and in the book of Glendalough. The remains of the forts and palaces, therein mentioned, are still to be seen in Kilkenny, Wicklow, and other places, and this fact refutes the notion, that the Danes built our duns or forts, though they raised some, as to these *Ledwich* errs.

THE PALACES, COURTS, PARLIAMENT HOUSE, AND
PARLIAMENT OF TARA.

Passing on to another part of the programme laid down for this evening's lecture, I need not repeat myself by apologizing for taking it up at so late an hour, and in this order. For having done so I have already received your assent. There is no lady or Irishman whose heart does not beat high at the very name of Royal Tara. The song of our own immortal Moore, translated into Irish by the distinguished Archbishop of Tuam, "The Harp that once through Tara's Halls," has charms for every native of the Emerald Isle. Every Irishman, of every phase of creed or policy is proud of his native land and her ancient fame. Feis Teamhra (Fiss Thevra) or the parliament of Tara, and its great legislator and monarch, Ollamh Fodhla (Ollav Fyola) form a theme too noble for my humble capacity. He was to Ireland what Solon was to Athens, what Lycurgus the Spartan lawgiver was to Lacedemonia; he was a scholar of the first order, and he was the eight in descent from Milesius, King of Galicia, or Biscany, in Spain, and was son of Fiachnadh Fionn Scotagh (Finn Scoagh) son of Seanna, son of Artrigh, of Eivric, son of Heber, son of Ir, son of Milesius. Ir's descendants were the most distinguished for renown in arms, literature, and all sciences. Ollav reigned forty years according to O'Flaherti, but thirty according to Mac Curtin and Keating. I will give you the radices of his name, as I believe them to be. "*Ou*" *all*, and lamh (lawv) hand—that is to say, handy or learned in every refined art. If I venture to give you a homely but well understood phrase, you will pardon me. He was what is popularly termed, "Jack of all Trades." He could wear the crown, wield the sceptre, use the sword, act the lawgiver, sit as judge, become the advocate, write poetry, compose history, investigate antiquities, and exhibit himself as a monarch of the most profound erudition, the most courtly manners, the most unbounded regal munificence and splendor in entertaining the sub-kings, their queens, the nobles, the military, the antiquarians, annalists, poets, and their respective attendants. Mac Curtin says that he wielded the sceptre of Tara, A.M., 3082, A.C. 922 years. This would be, if we allow the age of the world to have been 4004 when Christ was born; but, if 4021 be the age, he ruled 939 A.C.

O'Flaherti, in his *Ogygia* states, that he was monarch A.M. 3236, that is 785 years A.C. O'Flaherti was a pupil of the learned Mac Firbis, who spent thirty years composing a history of Ireland, in the castle of Leacan, in the county of Sligo; hence the work was called the book of Leacan. It may be interesting to know who were the compilers of the books of Ballynote and Leacan. The works are of the fourteenth century, by several parties. The chief writers were Solomon O'Drum, Magnus O'Duigenan (on the Argonautic expedition) Mac Egan and Mac Firbis.

You are not to wonder at a difference of chronology, as it is not to be relied on. At best it is only conjecture. The exact year of our Saviour's birth and death, the most sacred, intensely interesting facts that have ever existed, are not agreed upon. One of the Hebrew chronologists makes the birth of Christ A.M. 4580. Theophilus, a Greek, says it happened A.M. 5476. Amongst the Latin writers, Sanet states that the fact occurred A.M. 5351. St. Jerome, 3841; Alphonsus, 5984. Hence it is certain that we must be contented to be sure as to facts, even though there may be disputes about dates and places. Facts of great import float down to us by tradition in a chainless chain from father to son. But the omission, erasure, or mistake of a letter can materially alter a date or the name of a place, whilst the fact stands. No man can, with certainty, point out the exact site of Troy, nor the very year on which it was erected, yet we are all agreed that Troy and the Trojan war were.

TARA AND OLLAV.

I can no more than give a hasty description of Ollav and his palace, though the topic would afford an ample theme for many lectures. The hall, in which the parliament met, was a wooden building, 300 feet long, 45 high, 75 broad, and having fourteen doors to afford facile entrance to all; the great state room being built from east to west. It had a stated place for each king, prince, and senator, in provincial order, these of each province sitting next each other. In the centre of the senatorial hall was enthroned the king paramount, and looking to the west, the princes and deputies of Munster on his left, those of Ulster on his right, of Leinster in front, and those of Connaught to the rear, to guard and watch the whole. So writes Rev. Mr.

Hansbrow, a Presbyterian. The great court, called "*Miochuart*," the royal palace of the king paramount, was surrounded by four other royal ones for the provincial kings. Not far from these were three spacious courts. One for the queens, the ladies of rank and their respective households. This was splendidly fitted up, (nor are we to feel surprised that such was the fact,) whereas that of Queen Dido is represented by Virgil so gorgeous, though long anterior to the palace of Tara. The second was for state prisoners, who used to be treated with marked attention according to their stations. Some of them used to be loaded with golden chains to mark their rank. A country that could thus load their captives with the precious metal, must have had it in abundance. The third court resembled our Four Courts, and to it was attached a prison for felons, such as Richmond Bridewell, or Newgate. In this last court were held the assizes. The judges, poets, Druids, and 53 antiquaries met in this last place to decide law cases, settle disputes, regulate the customs of the country, and fix punishments for delinquents. The ladies court was kept with great splendour; and etiquette of the most refined character was observed; the parliament sat about the fourth of November. During three days before, and as many after the first of the month, the royal families held three levees, exchanging courtly visits, and exercising the most profuse hospitality with the greatest pomp and elegance, making mutual presents, and thus establishing lasting friendship. Such was the royal grandeur of old Tara in the days of Ollav. It is then no wonder, that we look back with regret on the past magnificence of the golden age of that once rich Meath. Every Irish heart throbs with tearful joy at the bare recital of "The Harp that once through Tara's Hall." I will not give you the Irish names of all the palaces and courts, as you all may not understand me. I should have told you the parliament was triennial. The persons of the senators were held sacred; so much so, that any attempt to injure them during the sessions, was death without a possibility of pardon; to any man who offered violence to a woman, the like penalty was also awarded. These circumstances are written by eminent scholars of all nations, more so than by native writers. This is but one evidence of their great truthfulness. Before the parliamentary session commenced, the whole assembly, kings, chiefs, senators, civil and military officers, bards, annalists, and

antiquaries, dined together in a sumptuous way. When dinner had been prepared and all strangers removed, the Grand Marshal ordered the chief trumpeter to sound three times, with a pause between each. At the first signal the shield bearers of the princes and deputies advanced to the grand entrance, and gave their masters' shields in charge of the Marshal, who got them hung up in order of precedence. On the second blast, the shield-bearers of the generals did as the others, and so did the Marshal, but ordering the latter to be placed in a second row. On the third signal the members all gracefully entered, and took their seats under their shields, which they knew by their particular crests; the poets and antiquarians at one end of the table, and the great officers of court at the other. After dinner the business commenced soberly and solemnly, remarks Hansbrow. What a model for our Christian monarchs and senators! At this sitting they repealed bad laws; enacted or improved good laws. When the legal business had terminated, the records of the nation, likewise these of the sub-kings, the chiefs, and other families, were investigated. Such as had been approved of, were ordered to be copied into the great National Register, the Psalter of Tara; whilst such as were found to be false, were condemned, and if the falsification was proven to be deliberate, the poet, annalist, or antiquary, was fined and degraded. The sub-kings and the chiefs had each his bard and historian. Each was most jealous of his master's fame and honor, and therefore each was a check on the other; and when all princes, chiefs, officers, historians, assembled face to face, "*soberly and solemnly*" (as Hansbrow writes) not heated with wine, it was easy to detect and punish any attempt at a falsification of facts. From this course it is quite clear to any unbiassed mind, that there never existed a more authentic work than the Psalter of Tara. Here, again, we have an irrefragable proof of Ireland's early claim to letters. How could records be preserved without characters of some kind? or how could they be examined? how could parties be punished for falsifying them? how could the parliament approve of them if they were not placed before them? and how could they be voted to be placed into the Psalter of Tara? I can, therefore, safely assert, that we had letters of some kind in the days of Ollav, be that 900 or only 700 years before Christ. But I am satisfied that the use of letters was ever in Ireland up to the days of Ollav. The Druids, who had the tuition of the youth to look after,

practised memory rather than writings, that thereby they might the more easily deceive; but Ollav would have no false records; he should have an infallible registry of facts. He knew the force of "*littera scripta manet*." Man might forget or falsify, but the deliberate resolutions of sober men might be relied on, and Ollav would have monarch, prince, chief, and servant equally bound by them. Many of the Irish Pagan kings made the same searching inquiry into the annals, especially Cormac O'Quinn, and Laoghaire or O'Leary, who ruled when St. Patrick arrived. There is no nation in the world pursued the same plan, and, consequently, no country has such ancient and authentic records as we have. What a glorious monarch! what a grand constitution at so early a period! What great minds, what massive intellects, what penetrating genius, what profound talents, what erudition and incorruptibility our Pagan ancestors possessed; I blush at the degeneracy of these Christian days, when such general corruption, depravity, and vice, sweep over the land. It would not be so if our great men and monarchs studied the history of the past, and learned from it how to hate vice and appreciate a high sense of honor as practised by even Pagans."

THE IRISH COATS OF ARMS.

Connected with this subject I am to explain relative to the coats of arms of those days. Up to the reign of Fodhla (Fyola,) there was but one such amongst the Irish. It was a dead serpent. The origin of it was this: I have told you that Moses and Niul met;* the Israelites in their flight from Egypt had banners, each having a particular device. The tribe of Levi had the ark, that of Judah, a lion, and so on. Now it is recorded that Gadelas, the son of Niul, was cured of the bite of a serpent by the touch of the rod of Moses, and that therefore Sru in selecting a device for banners, adopted as his crest *a dead serpent*. This account, Keating states, he has taken from the book of (Leath Cuinn) Lecan. Until the reign of Fyola there was only one device (the dead serpent) amongst the Irish; but at the triennial parliament, a coat of arms was assigned to each prince and noble, to be henceforth adopted by

* See the note respecting the fact in page 31.

them as a distinctive mark of rank. The Irish annalists hand us down an exact description of the coats of arms of almost every nation. For instance, they say that Hercules bore a lion rampant; Hector, two lions combatant; the Romans, an eagle. We have the shield of Achilles explained as having delineated on it the motions of the sun, moon, stars, and planets; a sphere with celestial bodies, the situation of the earth, the flux and reflux of the tide, as well as other uncommon ornamentations, which rendered it an object of great admiration and contention after his death. The crests of Alexander the Great, Augustus Cæsar, and other men of olden days are given in detail. In fact, everything contained in our old documents is apt to make us love still more this old green isle. Adam Smith, and nearly all English writers admit that nothing for certain is known to them of England until Cæsar's time, and many of them confess that there is no authentic document regarding their country until the reign of William the Conqueror. This is their own confession, and not my charge of their want of early civilisation, which, it is said, they now possess, and which Ireland ever had, and yet has, and will have to the end of time.

THE BREHON LAW COMMISSION.

I would here, with hesitation, but still as a duty, advert to a subject which may vitally affect the national character. You have all heard that a work called "The Brehon Laws" is being prepared for the press, and that government is bountifully supplying funds for that purpose. That this book should be what the original authors made it, ought to be a matter of intense anxiety to every Irishman. The manuscripts, whence it is to be printed, are greatly mutilated and defaced. How will the missing letters, words, clauses, sentences, perhaps pages, be come at? This is a most serious question as regards the fame of ancient and modern Ireland. The blanks, being to be supplied from conjecture, the task is a terribly dangerous one. The substitution not only of a sentence, but of a clause, letter, or mark, could blacken, obscure, brighten, or illuminate the history of the past. Thus, even in English, when we jocosely say of a jolly fellow, "he had a pull for every visitor;" if one stroke of the *u* be lost, the phrase will run thus: "He had a *pill* for every visitor." What a vast difference in the sense of both expressions; the former signifies that he was a

generous man, the latter that he was a demon assassin.* Hundreds of more pointed phrases could be adduced to shew the danger of conjecture as to moth-eaten or mouse-nibbled letters, parts of letters, defaced words or clauses. I have no hesitation in thus publicly saying, that a tremendous responsibility rests on the shoulders of the accomplished and learned Doctor O'Donovan and Professor Curry. I defy them, or any six men, even though they were all grammarians and philologists, to be certain of the sense of some passages, which they will meet with in the manuscripts. It is impossible for them, with any certainty, to arrive at the true interpretation of the context of mutilated passages. By whom are they assisted? by excellent Irishmen it is true, most accomplished scholars, most amiable clergymen, admired and respected by all, who are acquainted with their patriotic and thoroughly national disposition. But all these qualities will not suffice. There is an essential want; it is this, they are not *practised* Irish scholars. Their ear was not attuned to it, their mouth was not formed to it, their mind was not indoctrinated with it. They cannot speak it. They may know a little of it, but a little will not suffice. A peasant, whose father was a good Irish Seanachee, and who is so himself, but who may not be able to read or write the Irish, would be a better help to a man that would arrive at the true sense of an incomplete passage. The truth must be told; the matter deeply affects the honor of this nation. The public ought not, will not be satisfied with such a work, brought out in such a manner. Suppose the sense of a passage be disputed by the gentlemen composing the commission of publication, and supposing that Doctor Graves is in the chair, or any of them, and that there is a difference of opinion—Messrs. Curry and O'Donovan (the chief parties,) say one thing, Doctor Todd thinks differently, perhaps so does Doctor Graves; the disputed point is put to the vote, the chairman decides with Dr.

* A phrase, quite pertinent to the question of the danger of conjecture in reference to disputed passages, has just occurred to me, and even as a note, I am tempted to give it—"Is cóir dion a thabhairt do 'n m-bochtan,"—"To shelter the poor is a duty." "Is coir dion a thabhairt do 'n m-bochtan,"—"To shelter the poor is a crime." You can thus learn what a great difference in the meaning of a passage the omission of even an accent can effect. *Cóir*, pronounced *Kóir*, signifies a duty, righteousness, or righteous. *Coir*, pronounced *Kir*, (as nearly as I can give it in writing) means a crime, or transgression. The question of the Brehon Laws is of the first importance for the consideration of all Irishmen.

Todd, and then, as chairman, he has a casting vote. Where then is the opinion of the two Irish scholars. This is no chimerical hypothesis. It must occur—it will happen. But granting it never occurred, how could any two men undertake to stamp as authentic, defaced or mutilated documents. They cannot, they ought not; the people will not look on them as such. I am free to acknowledge my great and sincere affection for these gentlemen, and in proportion as I respect them, in the same ratio do I feel for their present position in regard to the Brehon Laws. There should be a consultation of six or twelve reputed Irish scholars, whenever critical passages come under discussion. Now, granting that the four gentlemen ardently love Ireland's fame, (and I am not to deny it, their labors tending that way,) yet a nation's character with posterity, should not be entrusted to their knowledge. *I would not trust it to any four living men.* It is a solemn office, not lightly to be undertaken. The subjoined passage is from Ledwich's Antiquities, and is from the pen of Charles O'Connor. From it an estimate may be formed of the difficulty of the task:—"Our Irish jurisprudence was almost entirely confined to the Phœnian dialect, a dialect understood only by the Brehons, the law advocates, and a few who had curiosity to study our law language. I have seen and possessed some of our Phœnian tracts; and having an opportunity in my youth of conversing with some of the most learned Irish scholars in our island, they freely confessed to me, that to them both the text and gloss were equally unintelligible. The key for expounding both was, so late as the reign of Charles I., possessed by the Mac Egans, who kept their law-school in Tipperary, and I dread that since that time it has been lost. But I have been informed, that Douald M'Firbis, the ablest scholar instructed by these Mac Egans, was employed on a Law Lexicon, in which it has been said, he made a good progress. Possessed of such an expositor, our law-learning (the product of many ages) might be discovered, and become a valuable acquisition."

How delighted would I be, if I knew that the missing Key, or lost Glossary, were now in the hands of the Brehon Law Commissioners. It may be, that, in the wide range of search, they have lighted on it. If such be the fact, it would be candor to say so, and thus give confidence that there is a probability that the work may be relied on as a volume, perfect, as under the circumstances, could be reasonably expected.

The government, in order that mankind may form a favorable judgment of its motive in this matter, is bound to seek out and to send round to some Irish scholars of repute in Ireland or on the Continent, proofs of the work before it is struck off. This is the only course that will gain any degree of respect for their motive in producing the work. This will protect the fame of O'Donovan and Curry with posterity, otherwise it will be in great danger, and there will be great peril to the national character, which is by far of greater importance. O'Donovan loves his native land intensely, but I tell him he may now either raise her fame, or help to ruin it before the nations of the earth. The public are very much misled by fame, which seldom judges aright. There are men in this city supposed to be Irish scholars, who are not such! The journals say they are—whereas, the parties themselves *feel* they are not. I have seen a monstrous eulogy in one of the papers of the Kilkenny Archæological Society of a party as the Mabillon of Irish history! Why, the party so eulogised must laugh heartily at the matter, well knowing that he was not a subject for such praise. It is time to put an end to a practise so detrimental to the literary name of Ireland. There are as good Irish scholars in this country as any who have of late figured in public—aye, hundreds perhaps better. They are well known in their respective districts. This is a question that demands the attention of the people. Imagine parties as examiners in the Irish, and not being able to speak our language. The useful grammar of the language, written by the youthful Rev. Ulic Bourke, late of St. Jarlath's, but now of Maynooth College, is a sample of the knowledge of the Celtic, possessed by the people of his native parish. His work is to a great extent the result of a practical—or, if I might so say—a natural acquaintance with the tongue. There are many peasants who could dictate, and could produce a valuable Irish grammar, if they could only use the mere mechanism of writing. They know the philosophy of the language though they be not scriveners. I might here remark that the best scholars are generally very imperfect scriveners; the reason is this—the hand is compelled to keep pace with the mind, and as spirit travels faster than matter, so do the thoughts than the fingers of the penman; consequently the manuscript of a scholar is sure to be imperfect, the hand not having sufficient time to impart a perfect finish to the words, which are the signs of his thoughts.

ANCIENT NATIONAL MILITIA.

As to our National Militia, I have not time to speak of them as the matter demands. There was never better disciplined, nor braver men than they. Their system of strategy was most perfect. The standing army was only three legions, of 3,000 men to each, unless in case of necessity, when the number was nine legions of 3,000 men each. There was a Cath-whileadh (Caveelee,) or Colonel over each legion, and a man known, loved, and trusted, by the men in his command; every hundred men had a captain of the same character; a lieutenant had fifty men; a serjeant, who was like the Roman Decurio, had the command of twenty-five men. But when the army was drawn out in battle array, there was an officer to every ten men in a rank, and that was the usual order. It is on this account that the erroneous impression exists, that one man was equal to ten men of any other nation; whereas its meaning is, that the officer, with his ten men, would encounter any ten enemies. It was death by the military law to recede an inch—but to advance fearlessly. The Irish militia laws were most honorable. By them no candidate could be taken into the ranks until he had first subscribed to these articles:—first, that in selecting a wife, he should do so for her virtues, her courtesy, and good manners—not for her fortune; second, that he would never offer violence to a woman's honor; third, that he would be charitable to the poor; fourth, that he would not refuse to fight with any nine men of any other country. From this it appears how particular Finn MacChumhuill (Cooil) was in selecting men for his army. Never was an army superior to these Pagan soldiers in bravery, discipline, and morality. They generally subsisted during six months of the year by fishing and hunting, and where ever night came on them, they fitted up temporary sheds of and by the boughs of trees; their beds consisted of the same materials, strewed over with rushes and moss. In the winter months they were maintained at the King's expense, and billeted amongst the people. They took only one meal, and that in the evening. To prepare for it they dug large pits, and into them they put alternate layers of stones, dried wood, and meat tied up in rushes, and then applied fire to the bottom, as we now dry corn in our rural kilns. This being done, they went to wash off the day's perspiration in some water, near which they were always sure to rest for this purpose. And such was their

modesty, Miss Brookes and Rev. Wm. Walker say, that they first washed the lower part of themselves, and then having tied their shirts round their waists, they washed the upper part. What morality in Pagans! but it is admitted on all hands, that Pagan or Christian Ireland at all times was pre-eminent in this respect; the few exceptions do but prove the rule of Irish morality. Some lying historians, who wish to make money by ministering to the morbid appetite of the lovers of romance and vulgar nonsense, have sought to bring discredit on our Irish militia and their generals, by telling myths, relative to them. Amongst this vile hireling class, is Hector Boetius of Scotland, who represents Finn Mac Cooil as a man of enormous stature, fifteen cubits high. But the ancient native records tell us, that he was a man of ordinary size, that he had under him men of larger size, and of a more robust body. Never was there a better authenticated fact, nor more certain, than that Finn was in existence, and of great renown in Ireland as a veritable man, and a polished courtier. His parentage, pedigree, the time of his birth and death, can be ascertained by reference to Keating, O'Flaherty, O'Hallaran, and others. The history of Magh Lena, which I understand has been lately edited by Professor Curry, will convince any rational man as to the existence of the illustrious Commander-in-Chief of the Fianna Erin. To this day, when the peasantry turn up hard black earth, they call it "Finn's earth," thus meaning that it is some of the remains of the burnt clay which remained of the pits in which the Fianna cooked their meat. It must be borne in mind, that it was not native writers forged the fables, but men of other countries, and for the purpose of traducing the Irish character, and to throw discredit on our history.

I wish here to supply an omission by stating that my aim in having made the calculation in the early part (page 41,) of the lecture, was to account for a long period of years in the translation of Keating's work, and which, to some, would seem not to be reconcilable with facts. (See page 31.)

I am unable to give expression to the sense of obligation I am under to you for the great patience with which you have listened to me, and for the cordiality which you have throughout exhibited during the delivery of my address. Believe me, I shall not easily forget it. It is intensely gratifying to find such a love of the olden tongue, which requires, like a sterling friend, only to be known to be thoroughly admired and cherished.

I fondly hope I shall often again have the distinguished honor of addressing you on this delightful subject, and of conducting you through the enchanting fields of Irish poetry. Let me observe, in conclusion, that the presence of so many eminent scholars, as well lay as cleric, as well Catholic as Protestant, amply rewards me for my poor effort. Would that Irishmen may unite on other subjects as on this; how devoutly to be wished—

Erin! thy silent tear shall never cease;
 Erin! thy languid smile shall ne'er increase,
 Till, like the rainbow's light
 Thy various tints unite,
 And form, in heaven's sight,
 One arch of peace!

BREHON LAWS.

It occurs to me that the term "*Brehon*," or "*Judge Laws*," is a misnomer—" *Parliament Laws* " is the proper name—as the laws were enacted by our Irish Parliament, not by the judges, who only interpreted the Acts of Parliament, and gave their judgments according to such interpretation. Indeed, as Mr. Williams of Dungarvan, (an excellent Irish scholar,) in a letter to me, observed, the English laws might be denominated "*Judge Laws*," as *Parliament Acts* are of no weight against the *will* of the Judge, who interprets the text of the statute to meet his own views.—A corrupt Brehon was sure, in olden Pagan days, to be signally punished, after having been unbenched. How different in these Christian times!

APPENDIX.

From the Work of JAMES PARSONS, M.D., Member of the College of Physicians, and Fellow of the Royal and Antiquary Societies of London.—MDCCLXVII.

THE IRISH ALPHABET.

“Now, there is something very well worth considering in this matter ; it is said, that Cadmus brought sixteen letters only from Phœnicia, and that others were added by Palamedes, &c., to fill the alphabet, as the Greek language has it now ; it is, therefore, extremely remarkable, that the Magogian, or Irish alphabet consists only of seventeen letters to this day ; which so fully answers every purpose of expression in that language, that they have not yet found any necessity to add new ones ; which, at once, points out its originality and simplicity, in a manner hardly to be disputed ; as it consists of fewer letters than any other alphabet in the world ; nor is it materially altered from its first state, so as to make any sensible difference ; which will appear by the table, where the alphabets of various ages will be exhibited, according to their seniority in that language, and farther explained in the sequel.

“There are authors who think that Palamedes invented the Greek letters ; others give the invention to Linus, the preceptor of Hercules ; and others, to Cecrops ; and, as Cecrops was said to be an Egyptian by birth, that he might have had the knowledge of letters from Moses, who was about that time in Egypt ; but it is easy to see, that there is very little affinity between the Hebrew and Greek alphabets ; and it would even be absurd to suppose, that there were no letters in Greece before the times of these persons, who came late into the world, compared to the ancients, or Aborigines, who were Pelasgians all over that country ; but it will be seen that the Greek alphabet had another source ; and has a greater similarity with that of the Magogians and Gomerians, than with the Hebrew ; but the former have evidently preserved the simplicity of theirs, as we have shewed before ; so they have the purity of their language, in their present recesses in Ireland and Scotland, in our own

times, for the reasons often alleged before. . . . This opinion is pretty clearly evinced by Diodorus, in his third book, speaking of the Pelasgian and Phœnician letters, where he says: therefore the letters were called Phœnician, because they were transported from the Phœnicians; these first were called Pelasgian letters; and the curious coincidence of the fact of Fenius's having carried learning from Scythia into Shinar, and propagating it there; whence it gradually spread among the Phœnicians, long before Cadmus's leaving them, to go into Greece; but both Egyptians and Phœnicians had colonies settled in the maritime places in Greece, before he arrived there, and the old language was much mutilated at his arrival: notwithstanding what is said by several modern authors, that the Phœnicians first invented and taught letters.

"To be well acquainted with what has been handed down by those filids, or bards, in the Psalter of Cashel, and the Leabhar Gabhala, as well as others, now extant, would be the best qualification to read what Sir Isaac has given in his book, mentioned before, as well as other modern authors; the facts are very striking, and the similarity of circumstances amazing; and his connections, however mistaken and disagreed to by other chronologists, are made manifest, by these filids, in a more clear light; which were clouded by the Greeks, and, in their veiled condition only, taken up by him, as well as other ingenious men. . . . Buchanan, Ware, Ward, and others, say 'a colony of Spaniards, or Scythians, by the name of Scots, settled in Ireland in the fourth age of the world.' Nennius and Henry of Huntingdon say the same thing, the former of which computes the fourth age of the world to be from David to Daniel, or the Persian empire. The bards say, 'that Kinea Scuit (the Scots) and the posterity of Eber Scuit (the Iberian Scots) were a colony of Spaniards, who settled in Ireland about a thousand years before Christ.' Strabo, and the universal history, think, 'that the Phœnicians, who were the first propagators of learning in Europe, carried on an early intercourse and commerce with the Iberian Spaniards.' The bards say, 'That the ancient Iberian Scots learned the use of letters on the Continent, from a celebrated Phenius, from whom they took the name of Phœnicians.' Newton, in several places, says, "Nil, Belus, Sihor, Osihor, Toth, Ogmius, &c., were famous Egyptian warriors, who acquired great fame by their glorious actions and enterprizes.' The bards say, 'that Niul, Bileus, Sru, Asru, Tait,

and Ogaman, were mighty and famous in Egypt and several other countries.' These are the proper Magogian names, which the Greeks changed as above. Newton says, 'the Egyptian conqueror of Spain got the emphatical name of the Hero, or Hercules.' The filids say, 'a great hero, famous in Egypt, got the name Golamh, and Milea Espain, that is, the conqueror, or hero of Spain.' Newton every where says, 'Nil, Sihor, Osihor, &c., succeeded the Phœnicians in cultivating and instructing several nations.' These filids, or bards, sing, 'that Niul, Sru, Asru, and others, succeeded Phenius in teaching the use of arts and letters.' And this will be made more clear by and by, in tracing these great men, in the very places where they did really give those instructions, as delivered by the Irish, or Magogian records; which I do not pursue here, to avoid the interruption of this comparison of history. Newton, page 98, says, "in the days of Hercules, or the Egyptian conqueror of Spain, a great drought is reported to have burnt up a great part of the ground.' The filids sing, that 'the conquest of Spain, together with a great drought, which happened at the same time, forced the Iberian Scots to fly into Ireland.' This arid state of the air, which affected the greatest part of Europe and Asia, at that time, gave occasion to the fable of Phaeton's having burnt up the earth, by his arrogant attempt to conduct the chariot of the sun. Newton has it 'that the Hercules or Hero of Spain, is reported to be the son of Belus.' The bards say, 'Milea Espaine, or Hero of Spain, was the son of Bileus; and it appears so upon the genealogical table of Milesius, of which more hereafter.' Thence I stated in my Essay, that the fabled Hercules was the *bona fide* Milesius.

"Can any historical facts be better authenticated, than by this reciprocal agreement between those bards and our great Newton, &c.? This coincidence of times and parentage, within the same period of time, is extremely remarkable: from this hero, whom the Egyptians called Hercules, the old Britons, Hector, and the Scuits, or Scots, Milea. Thus we see that all those exploits, said by Sir Isaac, to have been performed by Nil, Sihor, Osihor, Ogmius, Toth, Belus, Dionysius, and Orus, the bards have ascribed to Niul, Sru, Asru, Ogaman, Tait, Bile, Don, &c. These are reported by the bards, to have been great travellers, spreading fame and conquests in many places, and were professed instructors of mankind, wherever they went; that they were famous in Egypt and great heroes."

APPENDIX II THE SECOND EDITION

OF

ANCIENT IRELAND AND SAINT PATRICK.

Encouraged by the general approval, (the quick sale of the first edition), stimulated by the numerous applications from England, Scotland, the Continent, and America, for copies, which could not be supplied, the entire issue have been disposed of within two months after publication, and still further urged by the repeated solicitation of distinguished parties, whose kind opinion is worth being cultivated, I have resolved to yield to the demand made on me of publishing a second edition. The soundness of the views advanced by friends, I fully recognise. They say, that as my aim in giving to the public the work, was the dissemination of sound principles and the clear development of national and Catholic facts, civil, social, moral and political occurrences, I would have failed in my aim unless the book circulated more largely. I confess the cogeny of such reasoning, and admit that a thousand copies was not such a circulation as could ensure a permeation of what has been considered useful and agreeable knowledge through a population of nearly seven millions of inhabitants. Several distinguished parties have written to me in the most flattering manner, saying that my book should be in the hands of every Catholic, and that it should be a class book. When preparing the materials for the press, I never for a moment fancied that my poor effort—an effort made from no sordid motive—would have been so widely and highly appreciated; nor do I presume to imagine that it merited such eulogy. However, as it would be ungrateful and uncourteous not to regard such a generous expression of approbation as sincere, I am bound to look on it as such, notwithstanding my own opinion to the contrary. In the first edition there were necessarily some errors, (of that fact no one is more convinced than myself). There are more difficulties to be grappled with in bringing out an Irish book than others, chiefly because printing in the old Irish characters has not been much used, and therefore a standard for the orthography has not been yet clearly fixed, nor have all the rules of grammar been sufficiently established. Up to this the language was written rather agreeably to the notions of individuals, than in conformity with defined rules, approved of by the concurrent judgment of Irish scholars. To write a grammar of any language for the present, the man, undertaking such a task, must be a thorough master of other kindred tongues, such as Greek, French, &c. Not that the Irish language is dependant on these for any part of its structure, but because a man's knowledge of them enables him by analogy, to arrive at useful conclusions, and facile rules of rendering the genius of our rich and venerable dialect understood by others, especially by these who are acquainted with the languages mentioned. A man, in order to be an eminent architect, must not be satisfied with a knowledge of one order—he must thoroughly understand the Ionic, Doric, Corinthian, Tuscan, and Composite.

Writing works in our old language at the present day is, a different thing from what it was when the language was universally spoken in

this island. Accents, aspirations, and eclipses are now necessary, and render the language almost phonographic, as giving each letter its plain value. This is decidedly a beauty and an immense value to a learner, and which the English dialect does not possess. This system, though partially observed by early writers, was not necessary, inasmuch as it was the *lingua vulgaris* used by all. It was nature itself as regarded this nation. Had type been as little applied to Greek, Latin, and other tongues as to the Celtic, see in what a backward state they would now be, though in a few more years, if Celtic literature progress as it is progressing, the result will be most gratifying. It is but an act of simple justice to say, that a national debt of gratitude is due to the firm of Messrs. HODGES and SMITH for the enterprise of having produced so cheap a work as the second edition of "The Annals of the Four Masters." Every Irishman's library should be graced with it. Had not our noble dialect peculiar features, entirely its own, it could not have withstood the terrible days now happily for ever passed away, nor would it, under such persecution, be so perfect as it is, requiring only accidental, not essential improvement.

The second edition revised, corrected, and enlarged, will contain, besides the preface, a defence of "Ancient Ireland," against the slanders of former and present libellers. It will be, from undoubted records, proven that her virtues were her own, and her vices borrowed from her cruel oppressor; that virtue was an indigenous plant—that vice was an exotic.

Some reviewers thought me rather severe in my language in a few passages. Well, out of respect to such, I shall moderate my terms. But the facts shall stand; and it must be remembered that the most beautiful rose has the sharpest thorn.

The bodies of notes are arranged in consecutive order, with some large additions, and omitting some of the former matter, all linked in such a manner as that the historical part will, I can promise, serve as a class book, comprising such a body of facts on all topics, relating to Ireland, as was before never given within such a compass. This part will come before the Dirge, and will make 250 pages octavo. There will be marginal dates. Every salient point of Irish history, civil and religious, will be placed on a niche, visible and intelligible to every reader. There will be no vague assertion—all will be authenticated on the evidence of reliable authorities. There will be no colouring, no bias in the narration of transactions. There will be no palliation of the bad Catholic, no exaggeration of Protestant persecution. From their own authors the information will be borrowed.

Next after this will be printed the Dirge, but not with as many *foot notes* as before, as the historical and philological remarks will be transferred—the former to the body of the history, and the latter to an epitome of grammar, to be placed at the end of the work. I expect to be able to present my readers with a treatise on the language in about thirty pages, which will be sufficient to enable him to learn the language. Indeed, our grammar can be given in a small book, at least as far as the ordinary learner requires.

St. Fiech's hymn, that of St. Seachnall, and another short one I intend to arrange, as well as the metrical version by my esteemed and

learned friend, Rev. C. J. O'Connor, will be placed after the history. As all are agreed that "A SCHOOL HISTORY OF IRELAND" is much wanted, I am to hope that my countrymen will back my effort by transmitting their names, as subscribers, without delay. Hundreds felt disappointed that I had not copies of the first edition for them, supposing that because I sent them circulars I was to take for granted they were to be set down as subscribers. I am too well acquainted with business to take anything for granted—I wish to be certain. The venerated prelates and clergy will, I trust, lend the same generous support as before, and if so, my attempt must succeed. Their sacred sanction will confer a blessing on my endeavours;—without such support it would be idle to expect to succeed; with it, I would be most sanguine of the result. Had I this edition out of hands, I have materials for other works arranged. A prayer book, in the old characters, an exercise book, a conversation book, a prosody on the language are sorely necessary. When I told a party at first that I had intended to produce a book, he said I would fail if I attempted to bring it out on a large scale—he knew so from experience—that I ought merely to give the poem and translation. He warned me as to a serious loss, if I went farther. I told him that a man should risk something for a good object, that I would chance it. I did chance it. Thanks to my countrymen I was not disappointed. I disposed of the most numerous edition of a Celtic work ever published in this country in a less number of months than it took years to sell similar ones brought out before mine. I lost nothing on the affair. I was agreeably engaged in a pursuit dear to my heart, and congenial to my feelings. There was for me no earthly pleasure equal to it. It was a labor of love. I am delighted to announce to my friends, whose kindness I shall never forget, that by my publication are realized the following pleasing facts: First—That there are at least one thousand nationalist readers to be had. Second—That there still exists an indestructible flame of nationality *never to be wholly subdued*. Third—That an active politician, besides attending to his ordinary business, without losing a moment from it, (as can be ascertained from pupils) can *think, write, and produce a work*, as well as talk for his country. Fourth, that such a man can compose a work, having *vitality* in it—not an *emasculated* one, not a crude narration of facts, perhaps omitting *unpalatable* ones. Fifth—That everything Irish is not a failure. Sixth—That a man does not suffer by placing confidence in the public, if he gives value. Seventh—and, though last, not least, that the heart of Ireland is yet pure, and throbs for freedom, if the man were to be had, able to win the people, and willing to lead them from an enslaved to a free, happy land.

I cannot close this letter without offering the expression of my sincere thanks to the press of every shade of creed or politics for their generous support. Their being pleased to publish this letter will bring me under a second debt of gratitude.

It is necessary to explain the cause of the delay of the publication of the Essay, which arose from the illness of the compositor who was engaged on it. As for myself, the only time I can devote to writing is after ten o'clock at night.

MARTIN A. O'BRENNAN.

The Most Rev. DOCTOR MAC HALE, LORD ARCHBISHOP of TUAM.

"St. Jarlath's, Tuam, April 3, 1855.

"My dear Sir,—I feel pleasure in becoming a subscriber for ——— copies of your publication of 'Ireland's Dirge.' Your taste for our Irish literature is not, I am happy to find, of that merely antiquarian character, which neglects the living, breathing forms of our beautiful language, and like the preservers of Egyptian mummies, wholly devoted to the decoration of the remains, out of which life has just departed. Were their zeal for our olden literature accompanied with an anxiety for its perpetuation, then it would be entitled to the praise of a laudable devotion to the fame and glory of Ancient Ireland. It is not one of the least strange anomalies of our country to find so many entirely sentimental about the old language, whose ears are at the same time so fastidious as not to endure the continuance of what has been ever deemed the moral striking characteristic of every nation.

"I remain, your very faithful Servant.

"Martin A. O'Brennan, Esq.,

"57 Bolton-street."

As my notes on Saint Fiech's and Saint Seachnall's hymns were of a critical character, both as they regarded philology and religion, and wishing to be thoroughly sound on religion, I thought it my duty to submit proofs of them to his Grace of Tuam, the most learned, polished, and orthodox of Ireland's sons on these matters. Here is his Lordship's answer:—

"St. Jarlath's, Tuam, April 27, 1855.

"Dear Sir,—I am glad your work is so far advanced as to be on the eve of publication. In the notes there is evidence of much research and learning. If, regarding ancient languages much better cultivated than the Irish, there is found such diversity of interpretations, it is no wonder if several words in the hymn of the Bishop of Sletty, some nearly, and others entirely obsolete, should be found a rich theme for the industry of its more modern expounders. Without, then, the dogmatism which insists on our own glossary being exclusively the right one, you can well take your place among those, whose patient labor in the elucidation of old and difficult forms of language, entitles their version to a fair share of attention. Wishing you again that encouragement which your devotion to the literature and religion of Ireland so well deserves.

I remain, your faithful Servant.

"Martin A. O'Brennan, Esq.,

"57 Bolton-street."

The Most Rev. DOCTOR FEENY, Lord Bishop of Killala.

"Riversdale, Ballina, March, 1855.

"Dear Sir,—The perusal of your letter gave me much pleasure, as it brought to my recollection the talents you displayed, when I had the pleasure of giving you lectures on Logic, in Saint Jarlath's College. You were then a *bonæ spei adolescens*, and I have no doubt that the literary acquirements which your then blooming talents showed you capable of accumulating, must have fitted you to accomplish satisfactorily the work which you have undertaken. I have great pleasure in subscribing to your work, and of assuring you of the interest which I feel in its success.—Believe me, dear Sir, yours faithfully.

"Martin A. O'Brennan, Esq., L.L.D."

 Several valuable letters were lost by the robbery lately committed on Mr. O'Brennan's house.

111 Dorset Street.

Dear Mr. O'BRENNAN,--your work on 'Ancient Ireland' has very much pleased me. It has kindled up within me feelings of admiration for the faith and virtues and learning of our beloved countrymen. Your research and diligence have both edified and surprised me. I am sure the work will reach a second edition, and as the labour has been pleasing, I hope it may be equally profitable to you. In its pages you have confirmed your high reputation as an eminent Irish scholar, your character for classical acquirements having been long since established. The work does honour to you as a genuine, disinterested, and patriotic Irishman; I have always known you to be, not merely a professing, but a practical Catholic. As a parishioner I am proud of you. With heartiest wishes, and prayers for your every welfare,—Believe me, my dear friend, most faithfully your's,

JOHN HAMILTON,
R.C. Archdeacon of Dublin, and
P.P. of Saint Michan's.

The Most Rev. DOCTOR O'CONNOR, *Lord Bishop of Salda.*
 "I take two copies from a sincere wish to encourage the work."

From the Most Rev. MILESIUS MURPHY, *Lord Bishop of Ferns.*
 "I have received your very valuable work, 'Ancient Ireland,' from the perusal of which, I hope to derive much information and pleasure."

Very Rev. B. I. ROCHE, *Bishop Elect, Galway.*
 "I have much pleasure in acknowledging the receipt of your book, so well got up, and so creditable to its author.—I am, my dear Sir, with sincere esteem."

From the Most Rev. I. P. LEAHY, D.D., *Coadjutor Bishop, Newry.*
 "I am sure I shall find your work very interesting."

From the Most Rev. Doctor M'NALLY, *Lord Bishop of Clogher.*
 "DEAR SIR,—I have had the pleasure of receiving by this post the specimen of your forthcoming interesting work, which you had the kindness to send me, and for which my journey to Rome prevented me from subscribing so soon as I had intended. You will now oblige me by having my name entered among the subscribers for two copies, the amount of which I hope to hand you personally in a day or two. Sincerely wishing that your literary labors may receive the encouragement to which they are entitled,
 I have the honour to be, dear Sir, your very faithful servant.
 "Martin A. O'Brennan, Esq."

From the Most Rev. Doctor O'BRIEN, *Lord Bishop of Waterford.*
 "DEAR SIR,—After a very long delay I at length send you a Post Office Order for a copy of 'Tuireadh na h-Eireann,' with a request that you will continue your very useful labours in developing the very valuable resources of our ancient Irish literature,
 "Believe me, dear Sir, very sincerely yours."

Very Rev. JOHN SPRATT, D.D., *Carmelite Convent, Dublin, 1855.*
 "MY DEAR MR. O'BRENNAN,—I will be thankful to you to take my name as a subscriber for eight copies of your forthcoming work, 'Ireland's Dirge.' It has afforded me the greatest possible satisfaction to learn, that very many of our Irish Prelates and Priests, who have been for years intimately acquainted with your excellent character, literary acquirements, and splendid talents, have united in commendation of it. I am, indeed, more-over delighted to hear, that almost all our hierarchy have sent their names as subscribers. This is an assurance that the work will be worthy of its accomplished author, highly calculated to subserve the interests of Catholicity, as well as to create a taste for Irish literature.

"Believe me, dear Mr. O'Brennan, yours sincerely."

Very Rev. Archdeacon MARTIN BROWNE, V.G., P.P., *Balla Mayo.*
 "Your work cannot fail of being interesting to the literary world. All who are anxious for the preservation of our ancient and copious language, and interested in rescuing from oblivion the annals of our country, celebrated for the piety and learning of its hospitable inhabitants, ought to second your spirited enterprise."

From REV. JAMES M'GOUGH, P.P., *Ballinderry.*
 "Now, in your work on 'Ancient Ireland,' you have done honour to

the ancient literature of the land, in finding and developing the genuine truth, the great antiquity of Ireland's history; and in entering upon the task, you were evidently inspired with nothing but the desire of truth, the love of country, and her ancient glory. For the sake of truth, it would appear providential, that, at the end of so many ages, one was found, after so much devastation; and burning, and destroying of libraries and works of Ireland, by the Danes and Saxons, to raise the veil of obscurity of Ancient Ireland, and present her before us in her pristine glory, opening to us the books of the land of Eire, of great antiquity, being an illustration of Christian Ireland, of her great renown, her joys, and her sorrows. In looking for the birth place of Saint Patrick, you do not confine yourself to a few authors, or even to those of one country, but you take up the records of antiquity, even of Europe, and weigh words and even commas in the balance, and at length you find for us the birth place of our glorious Apostle. Your work, being a genuine production of the genius of Erin, is particularly adapted for the exaltation and enlightenment of the minds of our countrymen; to inspire them with love of fatherland, and, with zeal, to imitate the virtue of their forefathers."

From REV. MICHAEL AHERN, Waterford.

"Lofty, indeed, as my hopes were in your regard, I found, when possessed of your book, how far short of the full measure of eulogy due to yourself, they had been. Your work, being recommended and approved of by a personage pre-eminent as an Irish scholar—in the perfection of which he is a lion, as well as in his countless other acquirements—places your character, and that of your book, on a pinnacle of established fame, far above the reach or sneers of those who may be disposed to envy you—I mean, by the great personage, no other than the gifted Irishman, the untarnished patriot, the Christian prelate, his Grace of endless fame, John, Archbishop of Tuam. Your paraphrase on the bishop and bard of Kerry, is the exponent of a difficulty hitherto felt, yet never surmounted, until you came to its rescue; supplied with materials of a world-spread construction, added to the skill of an enamoured vindication of his parents' wrongs. Towers and castles, built up of historical falsehoods and satanic lies, tremble before your pen, and yield their massive weight upon the guilty heads of many a creedless slanderer of our hereditary fame and national glory. Well have you gleaned and removed the gold from the dust, the pure grain from the foul chaff, into the granary of your beloved parent, like a dutiful child, in order to perpetuate in hearts yet unborn the love of your own for her, her religion, and, above all, her great Apostle, whose true panegyrist you have happily assumed to be, and in that duty you have excelled. I should not marvel if the Irish journals teemed each day with the praise and recommendation of your rare and learned work, thus evincing their love of country and creed, and their ardent desire of requiting you for services so vast, as your book is calculated to confer on the literature and religion of Ireland."

LORD DUNREVIN, Adare Manor.

"You brought out, in a very attractive way, the Ancient History and Condition of Ireland for all who love to dwell on the past glories of their country."

Dublin Evening Post.

"Mr. O'Brennan has performed his task zealously and industriously, and having determined that no effort of his should be wanting that might contribute to promote national objects, which concern every true Irishman; he undertook, and has creditably accomplished, a task of no trifling magnitude, and one which it required the utmost patriotic enthusiasm to enable him to perform. He has studied largely, and read diligently for materials to make proper use of the groundwork which he selected for his purpose; and the result is, that the poem appears in his work, illustrated and elucidated by a body of notes, which cannot fail of proving highly valuable to the student of Irish history. The slight glimpse which we have taken at this book, satisfies us that the author has executed a work of much utility and interest, and one which will identify him with those zealous laborers in the field of Irish literature."

Freeman's Journal.

"Mr. O'Brennan has devoted much time and attention to the study of the ancient language and history of Ireland, and, like many who have ventured on the same pursuit, he has been captivated by the singular beauties of our ancient lore, and has entered into it with the spirit of an enthusiast; these are the fascinating studies through which Mr. O'Brennan has had to lead his readers in the work before us.

"There is, indeed, one department in which we willingly abandon ourselves to our author's guidance, and that is, his grammatical observations on the language. In this point we consider Mr. O'Brennan's work as a particularly valuable one, and in it we believe him to be a thorough master of his subject. He combines the advantage of having known Irish well from his childhood, with the other important advantage which he derives from professional experience—namely, that of being deeply skilled in grammar and philology."

Nation.

"We had marked several other passages for insertion, perhaps still more capable of illustrating the intrinsic beauty of the poems, and, as specimens of the lucid and erudite manner in which Mr. O'Brennan has executed his task. It is a most desirable contribution to Celtic literature. We trust it will receive such prompt and adequate encouragement as may enable its patriotic author to pursue studies so congenial to him."

Dublin Evening Packet.

"That any man should be able to compress into a moderately sized volume of a couple of hundred pages, a treatise on so wide a range of topics, is a marvel. We are not surprised, when the author tells us, that this—*magnum opus*—cost him much labor, extending over no limited period. Mr. O'Brennan's object is good; he is enthusiastically fond of the Celtic tongue, as is every man who is tolerably familiar with its beautiful idioms, and figurative expressiveness. The poem which he translates, from its beauty of language, and peculiarly interesting character, will inspire the pupil with that desire to proceed and know more; which is the best incentive to the student of a language. And his notes evidence research and philological acquaintance with the Celtic tongue, which proves him an excellent Irish scholar. His capacities are indeed attested by several distinguished Celtic literatures. We again repeat, that Mr O'Brennan deserves credit for his work."

The Tablet.

"It is, moreover, what an Irish work ought to be, thoroughly and intensely Irish, in tone, purpose, and expression—Irish in every line from the semi-seditious motto on its title page, to its concluding prayer in the 'finis.' In these degenerate days of 'West Britonism,' it is equally rare as refreshing to meet with a work as indigenous of Irish soil as our native shamrock. Yet, the author, unmistakeably Celtic and Catholic as he is, with the most unconquerable hatred of English misgovernment, passed and present, has the good fortune to obtain the most unanimous approbation of the Irish press of all shades of politics; the *Packet* and the *Post*, rivalling the *Freeman* and the *Nation* in praise of so welcome an addition to Irish literature. The book, indeed, treats of everything that can be sought for connected with the various subjects it embraces, manifesting great learning and research on the part of the author, and conveying much information on obscure and disputed points of Irish history, interspersed with amusing biographical anecdotes and curious etymologies, which will be found not only instructive to the general reader, but highly useful to the Irish student. In collecting and digesting into such readable form so much that cannot fail to be interesting to the Irish mind, relating to Irish topography, family history, and antiquarian subjects generally, as well as in the excellent translation of Bishop O'Connell's poem, and of SS. Fiech's and Seachnall's hymns; the author has proved himself to be a laborious and successful toiler in the rich and unexplored mine of Irish history, and, to use his own words applied to Saint Fiech, a 'vigorous Irish scholar, after the Attic Style.' The work, on a first hasty perusal, seems to us to be as valuable an addition to the literary archæology of our country, as the present century has produced, if we except O'Donovan's translation of the *Annals of the Four Masters*. The book can stand upon its own merits. The most hostile critic cannot deny that Mr. O'Brennan has laboured zealously and diligently, and has succeeded in producing a work, both useful and interesting, which will honourably identify its author with the other generous and patriotic labourers, in the same rich but imperfectly cultivated field. The work will unquestionably add to Mr. O'Brennan's fame as a philologist."

The Dublin Review.

"An interesting Irish poem, written by John O'Connell, a member of the family of the Liberator, and a Catholic Bishop of Kerry, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, has furnished to the author of 'Ancient Ireland,' an occasion for putting together, in the form of notes, illustrations, and appendices, a vast variety of curious and valuable learning, in every branch of Irish antiquities and Irish literature. His work is indeed a repository of Irish learning, (which he) places within the reach even of the most hasty inquirer. Mr. O'Brennan's work may serve as, in some sense, an Irish Antiquarian manual."

From the Weekly Register and Catholic Standard, London.

"The substance of the book is a poem, the 'Dirge of Ireland,' written by the Right Rev. Dr. O'Connell, Bishop of Kerry, in the reign of Queen Anne; with an English translation and notes. * * * * *

The 'notes' are full of historical notices of Irish matters, and espe-

cially of the histories of Irish families. We said that Mr. O'Brennan was an enthusiast. That he is so, nationally and politically, he certainly is not desirous to conceal. We are certainly wiser than we were. Time was when such matters would have been seriously treated as treason by the English, and, it must be said, by any other government. Whether any other would tolerate it now, we cannot say. But observe what a thing is the unity of the Faith. Among us cold Saxons, it would be hard to find so great an enthusiast as Mr. O'Brennan; but it is absolutely certain, that if the man were found at all, and if he cared anything about religion, he would run into some strange heresy; would probably found a new sect, and at the very least join some old one. To attempt to retain such a man within the bounds of the establishment, would be like binding a young lion with a cobweb. But religious matters are evidently of the chief moment in Mr. O'Brennan's judgement; he is not only a Catholic, but ready to submit in every point, great and small, to the church and her rulers; and his love of Ireland, and his desires for her political independence, are not more zealous than his devotions to her Saints.

The Lamp, London.

"The learned and patriotic author of this volume is well known to the reader of the *Lamp*, whose columns have frequently been adorned with reports of his eloquent lectures, and extracts from the interesting work before us. Dr. O'Brennan has given an honourable example to those Irishmen who spend all their energy on the literary treasures of other lands, and neglect to work that native mine which contains such sterling ore. There is in these pages a vast fund of historical information, and a bold and manly assertion of the rights of Ireland. The eloquent metrical translation of the Dirges by the Rev. Charles J. O'Connor constitutes one of the ground characteristics of this valuable work, and a large quantity of other most interesting matter. We are glad to see that this book has been a good deal quoted in lectures in Ireland, in England, and Scotland. The author has made Ireland his debtor, by proving the truth of her claim to ancient literary renown; and his book ought to be a most welcome addition to the library of the scholar of any country."

Northern Times, Glasgow.

"The elaborate work with which the learned Principal of the Bolton-street Collegiate Seminary, Dublin, has just favoured his countrymen and the literary world at large, will do more to elucidate the history, manners, customs, and laws of Ireland, than many more pretentious books. It contains first, 'The Dirge of Ireland,' a poem of much celebrity, written in the reign of Queen Anne, in the old Irish language, by one of Ireland's venerated prelates, O'Connell, Bishop of Kerry, and great grand-uncle, we believe, of the illustrious Agitator, Daniel O'Connell. This poem is a sweet, though brief metrical history of Ireland from the earliest days to those of the poet. Her sufferings in the sacred cause of Catholicity are recorded in a style that would do honour to the best elegiac muse of modern times. Secondly, 'St. Patrick's Life, and illustrative of it, an ancient Irish hymn, the work of St. Fiech, one of the pious sons and venerable bards of Ireland, and one of St. Patrick's earliest converts, himself afterwards bishop of Sletty, and a great converter of Pagans to Christianity. Thirdly, a

Latin hymn, by St. Seachnall, with an English translation, and copious notes. The whole is concluded by a metrical version of the 'Dirge,' by the Rev. C. J. O'Connor, Kerry. Some interesting extracts, translated from Villaneuva's 'Confessions of St. Patrick,' will be found in the body of the work, and cannot fail to entertain the reader. To these valuable relics of ancient Irish literature our author has appended notes, illustrative of the genius and structure of the Irish language, to which too much praise cannot be awarded. He has managed to introduce into his not very voluminous book more information with regard to the antiquities, the religion, the history of his country, and the genealogies of the ancient families of Ireland than can be found in some well-stored libraries. His notes, illustrative of the so-called Reformation, are peculiarly valuable, and will have the effect of binding with indissoluble ties the children of St. Patrick to the faith of their great Apostle. We beg to recommend the work under review to our numerous readers. If they be Irish it will engage them to love their country more affectionately than before, and if they be not Irish, it will teach them to respect Ireland for the virtues of her ancient, and the undeserved sufferings of her modern children."

The Ulsterman, Belfast.

"But the great charm of the book is the amount of philological and historical matters, relating to Ireland and its ancient language, with which it abounds. Here Doctor O'Brennan exhibits close intimacy with the philosophy of the language and knowledge of the history of our country. In this regard, the book will be found most useful and interesting to students of Irish, and to all such we cordially commend it."

Mayo Telegraph.

"The more thoroughly we have perused this repository of facts—of vast importance to the ecclesiastic, and all historians—the greater is our conviction that the learned author has (to use the language of the *Dublin Evening Post*, in its splendid review of it) 'produced a work of no trifling magnitude.' 'The body of notes are highly valuable to the student of Irish history. He has executed a work of much utility and interest, and one which will identify him with those zealous laborers, in the field of Irish literature.' 'He has read largely and studied diligently for materials to illustrate and elucidate his book.' The *Dublin Evening Packet*,—a journal quite opposed to Dr. O'Brennan, as well in religion as in politics—has pronounced more warmly in favour of 'Ancient Ireland and Saint Patrick.' It has declared that 'the work is an important addition to native literature;' that 'the accomplished author did a great service to the land of his birth; and, that he was a most excellent scholar.' Hence we affirm that it is a grand book of reference; for there is scarcely an author bearing on our history, both in church, civil policy, chronology, geography, and biology, that is not referred to in it. We trust we will see it as a class-book in every college and school in this country."

Cork Examiner.

"Dr. O'Brennan has, in the volume before us, laid down his first contribution towards removing the obstacles which impede the student's labours. In so doing he has made a selection of a work whose sentiments and opinions, historical and political, were in most exact accordance with his

own, and which appeared to him calculated to promote those views, and sustain those recollections which he holds and cherishes. As in this, as in all other subjects where he gives expression to the strong nationality of his feelings and sentiments, O'Brennan writes with a vigorous and racy pen; he burns with indignation as the accumulated wrongs of his country arise upon his memory. * * * * *

* * * * * he is not a man to set a rein upon his emotions, where his sense of injury and injustice requires him to speak. He is no slave to hug his chains, 'or pine beneath them slowly.' His patriotism is too warm; it is gushing to overflowing; and it can only find vent in the scathing and uncompromising denunciation of the oppressor of faith and race. He feels passionately as he muses over the long faded glory of the past, or thinks upon the suicidal dissensions and errors which have produced his country's shame and degradation. All his yearnings are for the restoration of her independence, and the termination of the hated Saxon rule. In the language of the motto on his title page, he trusts that his Banba will yet be free, and the Saxon domination defunct. But from his inmost soul he hopes at least for the revival of the 'old soul-stirring, heart-moving tongue, and the restoration of nationality in all its integrity.' The volume before us is his contribution towards the attainment of his desiderata, and, unless we mistake, it will form no unimportant means to such an end."

Roscommon Journal.

"The compilation of this book shews great research, and an amount of varied knowledge rarely to be met with. Hereafter we shall avail ourselves of every opportunity our space may afford in making extracts, particularly subjects relating to this province."

Kerry Examiner.

"As far as we have read—and by the aid of notes, numerous and replete with learning, as far as we have been able to understand—the work abounds with information respecting Ireland and its once great *name and men*, that must prove deeply interesting to Irishmen. A very clever metric version of the poem, in English, by the Rev. Charles I. O'Connor-Kerry, C.C., a name familiar to the ears of Kerry men, is appended; the original was composed by the 'Right Rev. Bishop O'Connell,' a prelate who presided over the Catholic Church in Kerry, in the early part of the last century. Its literary intrinsic merit requires no eulogy from our pen."

Wexford Guardian.

"The work before us shows a laudable desire on the part of Mr. O'Brennan to fill up a gap in the system of Irish education. To the Irish student this must prove particularly interesting, as, we believe, it was never published before. We have not space for extracts—indeed, we have had time yet only for a cursory reading."

Newry Examiner.

"Mr. O'Brennan's notes are copious, and, as they embrace all manner of topics, contain a great variety of information on Irish history, ancient and modern. We cheerfully give to Mr. O'Brennan the praise of having done a good work."

Tralee Chronicle.

"We think Mr. O'Brennan may rest on that fame which the leading journals of Dublin have accorded him."

The Mayo Telegraph.

"Mayo may be proud of her talented son. We trust that every lover of the old land, the old tongue, and the old faith, will deem it his duty to spread this most invaluable book, which is such an addition to Irish literature; it will spread the flame of nationality: take it in any point of view, and its value cannot be duly appreciated."

Galway Mercury.

"This work of Mr. O'Brennan's may be regarded as a bright and rich pearl added to that bead of Irish literature."

Tuam Herald.

"This deeply interesting work, in the complication of which so much research is shown to be employed, and in which such an amount of varied knowledge is displayed. We shall return to it."

The Detroit (Michigan) Catholic Vindicator.

"We are proud the task of publishing has fallen into such able hands as those of Martin A. O'Brennan, principal of the Collegiate Seminary, 57 Bolton-street, Dublin, than whom a purer Irishman and patriot does not breathe; and is a gentleman every way qualified for such an undertaking. It is, indeed, deeply to be deplored that the rich, melodious, and expressive language of old Ireland should have been, comparatively speaking, suffered to decline."

N.B. It is only fair to say, that as the American Press did not receive copies, they could only re-publish the Irish reviews, and that they did with an evident hearty wish.

M. A. O'B.

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N.B.—There are many such as the above from Liverpool, London, and other places, but as there is not liberty to print them, I would not be right in doing so.

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"There is a fire in you that warms me in my old age; it shines bright and strong through the medium of your pen; and it would do me good to increase the pulsation of my heart by grasping your Celtic hand. I would give my mite towards re-printing your elegant preface, in order that it might be circulated far and wide as a powerful defence of Ireland."

From JAMES SHERIDAN, Esq., Eagle Foundry, Church-street, Dublin.

"I am happy to find that you are brushing the dust of your sleeping talents; it is a pity you did not think of it sooner; poor Ireland never wanted the aid of her enlightened sons more than she does at present; may every success attend your present effort, and induce you to form a council to propagate and circulate the ancient fame and greatness of Erin in times long past."

N.B.—To avoid the charge of discourtesy that might be fairly imputable for not printing extracts from many valuable documents of distinguished correspondents, it is my duty to state, that the letters, which happened to be in an overcoat, ready for the compositor, were taken away by burglars, and destroyed.

NOTE.

"ANCIENT IRELAND AND SAINT PATRICK."

A man who can only copy, read, translate, and talk Irish, is apt to criticise unfairly books in our native literature, because of his ignorance of the science and art of grammar. It is an ascertained fact that some of our most effective public speakers and public writers cannot account for the grammar of a single sentence of what they say or write! Surely such men should not attempt to pronounce judgment on the grammatical merits of a work. There are standard rules, according to which alone a fair philological judgment can be formed, and without a sound and keen knowledge of which, there can be but chimerical, crude notions. The habit of writing and commenting without such an acquaintance with grammar has been very injurious. Since I wrote the first sheet of the Essay, I have, on reflection, found that applying the rules of sharp criticism I was not perfectly correct as to the sounds of the vowels. The philosophy of this agreeable subject will be discussed in the second edition of "Ancient Ireland." It will be also shewn that phonography is the Ogham system.

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
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